THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS COMMERCE

VOL. XIII. B. BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR, NO. 41 ANN-STREET. NEW YORK, JANUARY 16, 1858. TERMS, $2 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 45.

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THE BRIDE OF AN EVENING.

A ROMANCE OF THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE DEAD PRIZE," "THE DESERTED WIFE," &c., &c., &c.

CHAPTER VIII.

PROPOSALS.

And he turned to—bend her corse,
As he loved all heavenly objects with uplifted eyes and hands;
As he loved pure inspirations—loved the pure—loved the unstained,
In a love constant with wearing its own name on desert sands.
E. B. BROWNING.

"General Sterne, I am deeply sensible of the honor you would confer upon me, sir,—even while I am constrained to decline it."

"Miss Poole, permit me to hope that this is not your *final* answer !"

"General Sterne, suffer me to hope that you will not again put me to the pain of seeming ungrateful for the distinction you would confer upon me."

"Then I have nothing to hope?"

"For making me so largely your debtor—no, sir."

This conversation took place between General Sterne and Honora Poole upon the morning of the proposed departure of his confidency.

Madam Anderly had been quite correct in her conjectures relative to the motives that brought the governor to Piedmont. General Sterne had known Honora Poole for the two years previous. He had been pleased with her from the first, and his regard had steadily increased. He had come to Piedmont with the purpose of proposing for her hand, and had embraced every opportunity afforded by his week's sojourn to push his interests with his inamorata.

Godfrey had seen his course with pain.

To put a final end to the affair, Honora Poole had this morning given General Sterne the interview he had so intensely desired and perseveringly sought.

And thus, as has been shown, she received and courteously declined his proposal.

And quite as courteously, the rejected suitor accepted his fate, and took adieu to the lady and her family.

But not for a moment was Honora deceived by his suavity. She caught the quick, and quickly withdrawn, dark, fiery glance of hatred shot beneath his black brows, at Godfrey Dalmain and at herself. And she felt that the keen eyes of jealousy had detected a fact hidden from all but herself.

"There are men," she reflected, "who, being kindly rejected as lovers, may be retained as friends; but this man is not one of these! I have made a mortal enemy of Governor Sterne."

In this opinion, certainly, the heads of the family coincided.

"Oh, Honora, Honora, my child, what have you done! General Sterne has departed in high displeasure! I see it even under all his politeness! Oh, Honora, what have you done?" inquired Madam Anderly, as she sat down with her grandchild daughter in the parlor, after the exit of her guest.

"Nothing that should disturb the equanimity of his constituency! I have gratefully declined his alliance—that is all."

"Oh, Honora ! Honora! to have rejected so lofty a social position, with all the advantages and emoluments it might have afforded you to heap upon your family and friends! Oh, Honora! you have no ambition!" said the old lady, lifting up both her hands in rebuke, "Oh, Honora! you have no ambition!"

"On the contrary, my dear grandmother, ambition is my besetting sin ! I crave distinction with a startling!"

"And yet you rejected this high destiny?"

"The distinction I crave must be a purely personal one ! must develop from within me, and must be my own ! should an emperor take my hand and set beside him on a throne, and bid me share his empire, I should not call that distinction ! I should still be an assistant to an emperor's caprice! But should I, striving side by side, in the battle of life, with one I honored, win a victor's laurel-crown,—" Honora paused and caught her breath at the vividness and splendor of the future her imagination conjured up.

"Romantic girl! well! you are but eighteen. But oh, Honora, you have not only lost a high position, but you have made a powerful enemy. Child, had you no fear?"

"None! General Sterne is at least an *honorable* enemy."

"Girl! girl! the sanity that grows from jealousy is near lunacy—it is excessive, unjust, vindictive, and made to be feared. No man of your reason, Honora, need ever expect political preferment or official favor, if Governor Sterne has the power to intercept or withhold it !"

"Well!" said Honora, yawning and laughing, "as none of my friends are seeking office, they will not be likely to need political advancement, and as none of them have designs against the majesty of the laws, they will not be likely to pray in vain the executive clemency!"

But, immediately after uttering these last words, the whole aspect of the speaker changed—she suddenly became grave, pale, and shuddered. She thought of the astrologer's prophecy.

"Why Honora, my child! what ails you?" asked the old lady.

"Nothing—nothing—a sudden silence—that is all! there, it is over now!" said the young girl, with a great effort regaining her composure.

The conversation ceased there, as Madam Anderly withdrew to attend to her affairs.

AGNES DARES DISCOVERING THE MURDER OF OLD MR. HAWK.

And ofcree many years had passed, with what bitterness Honora Poole remembered the girlish scorn with which she had received the idea of ever seeking political advancement, or seeking executive favor!

Much relieved by the departure of his powerful rival, Godfrey Dalmain continued the favored and happy guest of Piedmont. Every morning during his rode out on horseback with Honora and her cousin; but before the ride was over he was almost sure to find himself tete-a-tete with Honora, being either in advance or in the rear of the riding party. During the later hours of the forenoon he entertained the young ladies by reading aloud to them while they visited the embroidery-frames; but before the reading was over he was almost certain to find himself in warm and confidential discussion with Honora alone—one after another of the girls having withdrawn upon some slight pretext.

Why did the Misses Anderly act in this manner?

First, because with the quick perception of women they had seen the growing attachment between Godfrey and Honora.—Secondly, because with the unerring sensibility of girlhood, they really sympathized with the lovers—Thirdly, because being themselves somewhat worldly, they could feel no possible jealousy of their cousin's handsome though penniless admirer.

"They every fairly" was what should Mr. Dalmain be advancing his interests with the noble Honora. Did he avail himself of his opportunities?

We all know how persuasive an advocate is Hope when we once admit her to our councils. Godfrey Dalmain did not understand the overcoming power of the heads of the family with whom he sojourned —that pride which, in treating his upon equal terms, ignored the very possibility of his aspiration to an alliance with any daughter of the house. He only felt that every rational encouragement was held out to him.

He reviewed the circumstances—Madam Anderly and Colonel Shannon exhibited towards him the utmost degree of kindness and respect. The Misses Anderly tacitly recognized him as the suitor of their cousin. Honora herself manifested no regard—he knew it by the "secret sympathy" of their yet unspoken love.

Yet still he hesitated! How could he, a poor and struggling young man, venture to propose for the hand of her, the richest heiress in the State, without exposing himself to the charge of mercenary motives, sham of hospitality and gross ingratitude? Oh that Honora were poor or himself rich!

Meanwhile the day of his departure for Richmond drew near.

It was the evening previous to the morning upon which he purposed to leave Piedmont.

Madam Anderly and Colonel Shannon had retired.

The young people were promenading upon the long vine-shaded piazza in front of the house. But one by one they dropped off into the drawing-room, until at length, as usual, Godfrey Dalmain found himself alone with Honora Poole. Their conversation upon indifferent matters had died out —each being indisposed to speak upon subjects that concerned neither. The near departure of Godfrey occupied the thoughts and oppressed the hearts of both. An almost irresistible impulse tempted him to speak—to tell her at least of the love that filled his heart, and the scruples that withheld him from asking her hand. But then he thought—such a course of conduct would give him the appearance of diverting himself upon her generosity, an attitude not to be thought of for an instant.

"No! no!" he mentally exclaimed, "though my heart swell to bursting, it must be silent! silent!"

Meanwhile Honora, her hand trembling upon his arm, read his soul as an open book. Her own deep love gave her to feel the profundity of his passion—her own delicate sense of honor gave her to understand the fastidiousness of his scruples. Could her sweet grayer have annihilated those scruples they would have disappeared. But she—seeking political advancement, or seeking executive favor!

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Meanwhile Honora, her hand trembling upon his arm, read his soul as an open book. Her own deep love gave her to feel the profundity of his despair on discovering her to be an heiress; his vain struggle with his growing love; and final resolution to depart without declaring his feelings; and last of all, that little touch of true nature which had melted the soul of silence from his heart.

She heard him out and then broke forth in eloquent reply. She asked how it was possible that he, understanding her nature, as he claimed to do, should suppose her incapable of misconstruing his motives; or how it happened that he, indifferent to accidents of fortune as he professed to be, should yet affix so much importance to her possession of wealth as to make that circumstance an obstacle to a good understanding between them?

He smiled, and said—

"Your straightforward, trenchant nature, noble girl, would cut the gordian knot, rather than untie it. Well, dearest Honora! all that I have to offer you, is an upright heart that has never swerved from rectitude; a sworn heart that has never before bowed before the shrine of womanhood; a constant heart through good and ill, for time and for eternity, in wholly yours. Years may pass, dearest girl, before I shall be in a position to claim the coveted hand; and that you be to contract yourself in so long and uncertain an engagement would be ungenerous; therefore, dearest Honora, while I bind myself irrevocably to you as my liege lady, I would fain leave you unfettered by any promise."

"As if I would consent to so one-sided and unjust an agreement! No, Godfrey! my nature demands that every engagement to which I may be a party must be justly proportioned, clearly defined, well understood. I am not yet my own mistress. I am a minor, and belong in some sense to my grandmother and uncle. I could not under my circumstances marry without their consent. Go to them therefore, to-morrow, dear Godfrey, and make known our engagement, and solicit their sanction."

"You permit me to do this, dear, candid girl?"

"Duty commands us to take this straightforward course, dear Godfrey! But now it is time that we should separate for the evening—Good night! I will ask my good boy?"

"Good night! good night! may all good angels guard and bless you ! noble girl! dearest Honora!" he exclaimed, pressing her hand to his lips in passionate ardor, and then respectfully handing her through the hall door.

And Honora sought her pillow, not to sleep;—but to dream the dreamings "love's young dream."

And for hours longer Godfrey paced up and down the vine-shaded piazza in a dizzy trance of joy. Then sought his couch to dream of—Honora!

CHAPTER IX.

AMENDS IN MARRIAGE.

Ah me! for aught that I could ever read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth
* * * * * * * *
If, then, true lovers have been ever crossed,
It must be their fate or destiny.
Then let us teach our trial patience. SHAKSPEARE.

"Sir!" Dee-valley, sir! I—that is, it is time to get up, sir! De day's done broke, sir! an' de supper is ready, sir! And Aunt Polly, sir—she dares got a cup o' hot coffee in waace o' de family breakfas' for you, sar!—Sar! Mr. Dee-valley, sir—" cried it's time to get up, sir!" So rapped and called Zerubbabel, making a tremendous noise at the chamber door, and waking Godfrey from a delicious dream of going to horse-leaping with Honora.

He immediately sprang out of bed, and admitted his early attendant.

"Well, it is you, Zerubbabel!"

"Yes, please sar; an' here's hot water to shave, an' day's broke, an' your coffee's waitin', an' de horses too!"

"Well, well, Zerubbabel—let the horses be put back into the stable. I shall not go this morning. But tell me—what time does the colonel rise?"

"Sun's an hour from dis, sar."

"Very well. Let them know down stairs that I shall not go this morning; and do you come to me at the end of an hour from this to take a note to the colonel."

"Yes, sar," said the boy, departing.

Godfrey proceeded to make his morning toilet, and afterwards to write a note, explaining the circumstances had arisen to delay his departure for a few hours, and begging the favor of an interview with Colonel Shannon, at the earliest convenience of the latter. This he sealed, and sent by his valet attendant to the bedside of his host.

Colonel Shannon immediately returned a verbal answer, to the effect that he would be happy to see Mr. Dalmale in his study directly after breakfast.

Soon after receiving the reply Godfrey went down stairs and joined the family at the morning meal.

Madam Anderly politely expressed her satisfaction at having the pleasure of her guest's society for some time longer. And the young ladies rallied him unmercifully for losing his journey by—as they said—exercising himself. However, as usual, calm, simple, and stately, neither said nor did anything to betray herself.

Colonel Shannon, evidently moved by curiosity to know what the young gentleman could have to say to him in private, and by some surprising, the truth, was the first to retire from the breakfast room.

Colonel Shannon's study was the little front room on the second floor, immediately over the entrance hall.

Thither Godfrey repaired, to find the colonel already awaiting him.

The old gentleman arose and tendered a seat.

The young man declined it with a bow, and standing before his host, opened the subject of his visit. In a simple, manly, and dignified manner, he declared his love for Honora Poole, and his desire to make her his wife.

Colonel Shannon sat back in his chair, and gazed up at Godfrey Dalmain with incredulous astonishment.

That he, a poor student of law, should aspire to the alliance of Honora Poole—that he should venture to confess such flagrant presumption—that he should even dare to request him, her guardian, to sanction such high audacity—struck him with overwhelming astonishment!

He sat perfectly dumbfounded and staring at the suitor.

Under that rapped of arrogant amazement, Godfrey Dalmain felt his high spirit rising.

"Well, Colonel Shannon, I await your answer!" he said, with calm dignity.

But the colonel stared on, in blank panic, finding no terms in which to speak.

Mr. Dalmain was fast losing his patience. Nevertheless he still controlled himself, and after a moment said quietly—

"Colonel Shannon, I beg to remind you, sir, that I have not yet had the honor of being favored with a response, authorized by Miss Poole, and which I have a right to demand."

"My answer, sir! Sir, I am thunderstruck; sir! I am overwhelmed with astonishment, sir! Honora Poole, sir!—do you happen to know who she is, sir? Are you aware of her social position sir? of her high pretensions, sir? of her brilliant prospects, sir?"

"Colonel Shannon, I believe that I am fully aware of the disparity between the steps I have taken the pains to bring to my recollection. Furthermore, I know Miss Poole well, and knowing her heart and loving, desire to make her my wife," said the young man with stately courtesy.

"Sir, you are, I can only say, most astounded, sir!—yes, sir, astounded, sir!—yes, sir, thunderstruck, sir, at your effrontery, sir!"

"Allow me to recall to you, Colonel Shannon, the fact that Miss Poole herself has authorized the proposals that I have the honor to submit to you."

"Sir, you leave me *without words* to express my astonishment!"

"Pardon me for observing that that is no answer to my proposal. Allow me to state again that I love your ward, Miss Poole; I request your sanction and blessing upon our union, and I await for your answer," said Godfrey Dalmain, with great dignity.

"My answer, sir! You cannot for a moment be at a loss for it, sir. Marry Honora Poole, sir! No, sir, I cannot say so, sir! and would not say so, sir, if you that—that I stood appalled at the question?"

"Colonel Shannon, I am very forlornly prepared to answer, I have only to wish you good morning, Colonel," said the young man, bowing, somewhat hurriedly.

Colonel Shannon now in some degree recovered himself; recollected what became him as a host, and what was due Mr. Dalmain as his guest. Rising, he said, rather hurriedly, and perhaps somewhat accusatorially—

"Yes, sir! Miss Poole's family, of course, feel highly honored by the very flattering proposal you have made them; and they regret very much that the very urgent reasons they should be forced to decline the distances you designed them. Good morning, sir!" the colonel concluded, rather abruptly, seeing, in fact, that Mr. Dalmain, deeply disgusted, was not disposed to attend the confirmation of his speech.

Godfrey bowed once more, and withdrew. Assured of Honora's love, he carried away for her magician's unreasonable opposition. A few years, he knew, if they did not bring colonel Shannon to a more rational and humane view of the case, would, at least, enfranchise Honora from his authority.

With these hopeful feelings he went down stairs and sought her presence. At the "audacious proposal" and not yet been bruited through the family, no opposition was made to their meeting.

He found Honora in the midst of her cousins, in the family sitting-room. He greeted the ladies, and took his seat among them. And for a while all conversed gayly and pleasantly.

But presently Miss Angie called Miss Rose to help her bind up a honeysuckle vine that was drooping from the piazza, and Miss Lily volunteered to render her assistance also; and, as usual, Honora and Godfrey were left tete-a-tete.

He went to her side, and took her hand.

She looked up inquiringly into his face.

He smiled mournfully.

"Well, Godfrey?"

"Well, dear Honora, I this morning applied myself of your permission to lay my hopes before Colonel Chichester."

"And the result?"

"Was what we might have anticipated—a rejection of my suit." Godfrey paused, then, recovering how scornful and insulting this rejection had been.

"Well, what matters it? It was our duty to have no concealments from my guardian, but to make known to him at once our purpose. I even expected his opposition, and was prepared for it since; for though while I am rightfully under his authority, I will of course obey his wish, when I am my own mistress, I shall follow the militant dictates of my own mind. In three years from next Christmas I shall have reached my legal majority; I shall be mistress of myself and of my fortune. At the end of that time, dear Honora, you will claim me as your wife; and until that time regard me as your betrothed?" She said, and he pressed her hand.

He caught and pressed it to his heart. Then he took from around his neck a little black ribbon, with a slender gold ring attached to it.

"This, dear Honora, was my mother's wedding-ring. She is dying, placed it on my finger, and bade me wear it until I should find a wife to my beloved. I wore it on my hand until my finger outgrew it; then I attached it to this ribbon, and wore it around my neck. Will you suffer me now to obey my mother's behest, and place it upon the finger of my betrothed?"

"Yes; and the pledge shall be as sacred as if placed there in the church by the solemn rite," she said Honora, solemnly, bidding out her left hand.

He slipped the ring upon the third finger, lifted the lovely hand to his lips for an instant and resigned it.

"Honora, I may write to you?" he inquired.

"Assuredly; unless our correspondence should be fraudulent by my guardian, in which case it must submit and be patient, I suppose. Two years will wear around at last."

Again her hand was lifted, and pressed warmly to his lips, and dropped straight—lie, lo! Madam Audrey, with severe anger, appeared within the door!—Madam Audrey, who had just learned from the kindred Simmons "the audacious conduct of Dr. Dulanie." She entered, nodding stiffly, took her seat, drew her knitting-work from her ample pocket, and began steadily and silently to ply her needles. No more opportunity of private conversation was afforded the lovers.

In half an hour from that time Godfrey Dulanie bade adieu to the family; and after having thrown off a horse and groom, set out to walk up to Alabaster, which he reached at sunset, and whence he sent a messenger to Parliament to fetch his luggage.

And by the next morning's stage Mr. Dulanie journeyed on to Washington, at which he arrived in due time.

It had been agreed between Madam Audrey and Colonel Shannon that it would be the best policy to refrain from mentioning to Honora the subject of her discarded lover—that he might prehense be the more easily forgotten. So Honora was left in peace.

And when the next mail-day brought her a letter from Godfrey, with several for publication—for Honora had quite an extensive correspondence among her fair school-girl friends—regard notice. And when she answered it, sat down the answer with other similar looking missives into the hands of the mail messenger, for the general conveyance. In short, though Honora disdained to make a secret of the fact, yet either from pride or delicacy she did not really know of its existence, or that they did not think it polite to ask the shade of an interloper too tightly around her, or else because they had absolute confidence in her fidelity, or for whatever reason, it is certain that the correspondence was not interfered with.

There were but two mails a week at Altamont. By every Monday's mail she received a letter from her lover; and by every Tuesday's mail she replied to it.

Their letters were faithful transcripts of their daily lives. Thus Honora knew and shared the sadness, labors, hopes and aspirations of Godfrey at the university; and Godfrey enjoyed with her even the sweetness of her quiet rural days. Her life was made more sweet by her sympathy with his mental toils; and his studies were enlivened, his hopes revived, and his energies strengthened by her tender affection, unwavering courage, and hopeful faith.

* * *

It was at the next annual commencement, and just twelve months from the date of his first appearance with Honora Faulk, that Godfrey Dulanie graduated with the highest honors of the university, and was soon after admitted to the bar of Richmond—then, as now, one of the most exclusive in the world.

His debut before the court was one of the most brilliant in the annals of the state.

The fame of his splendid talents had preceded him to the metropolis; and he was retained by the defendants in a civil suit of great importance, upon the issue of which untold wealth pended, and in which already the highest legal talent in the commonwealth was on either side opposed. Mr. Dulanie, in addition to his other great advantages, possessed the supreme one of faith in the justice of his client's cause. The suit was long pending. Some of the most eminent lawyers in the state now grace the great national forum, and the aesthetic fires of forensic eloquence burn brightly. Their speeches—models of judicial oratory—preceded his own. But he had the reviewing of the case—the closing speech.

And his address to the jury was not only a masterpiece of legal knowledge, sound logic and moving eloquence—it was an overwhelming power, a magnificent triumph!

Without leaving their seats the jury returned a verdict for the defendants. And all knew that the cause was gained, by the opinion of young orator, who had burst as a new sun upon the world.

His success was universal. His brother lawyers gathered around him with congratulations which crowded in upon him; gold poured in to his coffers; and, above all, his clients—widows and orphans saved from ruin—blessed him in their mighty prayers.

In all this, of what did he think most frequently?

Honora! Honora! for he his boys were now!

In his regular correspondence with her, of course, the subject of the pending trial was occasionally mentioned; but when, at last, it closed with such glorious victory for him, he alluded to the event only slightly and modestly, until, at last, Honora wrote to him:

"Your present reach up from six hundred guineas. Oh, I will not speak of it! Your name is now in your triumph! I will not speak of it! Your fame is now in your triumph! I will not speak of it! Your fortune is now in your triumph! I will not speak of it! What is it—as to all these—to what I am? I am your betrothed—your wife! And while you are making up the packet, send me also the paper containing the account of the public dinner that was given you by the members of the bar. Ah! you see my fondness is unbounded, and I am the matter of a money of her sex."

But Godfrey, who, at the call of fame from the period this letter. He pressed it to his lips; he knew it sent to his heart.

Meanwhile, his success followed success with dazzling rapidity. He would not touch an unjust cause; but a just one in his hands was ever of triumph.

At the close of the court term he turned his attention to politics, the twin sister of law. He embraced the interests of Mr. Webster, the Whig candidate for the presidency, in the field.

But now an event was approaching destined to change the whole current of his future life.

CHAPTER X.

THE MISSIONARY CITY.

Oh sorrow by sorrow, and pain by pain,
Oh misery brow, the burdens of affliction;
The cold embrace of the mother and son;
The bonny's embarrassment. TENNYSON.

Our narrative now approaches one of those sad events that fall upon the human family like a thunderbolt, and, like a thunderbolt, shatter the strongest and most beautiful structures. Only a cloud—a mere cloud, a mere speck—appears in the sky; but, before we are aware, the whole heavens are overcast with the blackness of darkness, and the tempest is upon us.

From a heaven as fair as ever shone with fruitful promise, fell this thunderbolt to our hearth!

Godfrey Dulanie was stricken down in the very brilliant success of Godfrey Dulanie had produced.

He was prostrated by a malignant fever, and Hugh Hawe, dwelling in his remote and barely accessible home at Hoover's Hill, in the mountains of Kentucky, the old man's mild was failing, or from whatever cause it might have been, he certainly did not write to his son with his usual punctuality. Not a line came; but to his frequent visitor, Doctor Henry, he wrote from time to time:

"Ah but that paper, Godfrey is so, or, but not better than usual. Shall have to go down to Hale on the night of Christmas Eve; that he should spend Christmas day with Mr. Hawe, but could not get off before. I set out on my journey to Washington on the morning of the twenty-sixth. The prospect of seeing my son once more filled with the heart of the failing man with childish delight. And in the course of the day he sent forth to his old favorite, Dr. Henry, and, as usual, inspected his assistance to Agnes Darke, saying—

"My dear, I am afraid that I have been at heart aspect to poor Henry, and if so, how say unjust! My dear, I always even jaded, and sometimes I am ear on the side of charity, is it not? At least I must have a single harrier with him in the carriage upon a right footing, and have my purposes clearly understood. Take your pen, my dear, and write to Agnes and Hester to come over here as soon as possible, for that I am anxious to see him."

As soon as the letter was finished, and the note was dispatched by a messenger. After an absence of a few hours, the messenger returned to announce that Doctor Henry was absent, and would not be at home again for several days, but that he had left the note with Mrs. Henry.

Doctor Henry, in fact, reached home on the evening of the twenty-fourth, and, finding the note, sent the messenger to the two daughters of the old man, to make necessary arrangements for the journey of the old man.

The uncle and nephew were closeted for several hours in a confidential interview at the end of which Dr. Henry came out of the chamber with a solemn and sorrowful face, mounted his horse, and instantly rode home.

That night, according to appointment, Godfrey Dulanie arrived. The old man welcomed him with cordial friendship, had a long and confidential interview with him, dismissed the old pair his chamber until long after midnight, and, in fact, had Godfrey sent word to inform the old gentleman from sleep, insisted upon retiring to his own room.

The next day being Christmas, and fine, genial weather for the season, old Hugh Hawe was drawn out in his sleigh, and had a ride in the open air, then adjusted his chamber, which was attended on the ground floor, and visited in turn by those friends were left of them—once more at a Christmas dinner-table.

There were present Dr. and Mrs. Henry, Mr. Dulanie and Agnes Darke. It was scarcely a dinner, scarcely a feast—for the old man, overcome by his age and decrepitude, was, perhaps, as much to be pitied as to be envied. Nevertheless, the party was too hollow to be contagious, and his guests were not prevented from enjoying their meal by physician. Godfrey Dulanie's thoughts were absent with Honora Faulk; and Agnes Darke, whose genial spirit was usually equal to any occasion, was quite in coloring from the mood of those around her, and was not affected by it.

As the mountain pass was very bad between Hawe's Hale and Alabaster City, and as the old man nervous were short, it was necessary that, immediately after dinner, the doctor and his wife should be sent for home.

After they had taken leave and departed, the old man, still in his chair, and with his family, who gathered around the fire, and, strange as it may appear, the host and hostess, with the guests, were a great weight lifted from their spirits. The hours were passed in cheerful conversation until Agnes Darke rose to order tea; for it was understood by the last meal should be early served, as the old man, greatly fatigued, was anxious to retire to bed, and Mr. Dulanie was under the necessity of leaving the same night for Alabaster, to catch the early stage for Washington City.

Agnes was a thrifty little house-keeper, and under her auspices tea was soon served.

When the meal was over and the table cleared off, the household servants were brought together, and, at the request of old Hugh Hawe, Godfrey Dulanie conducted the evening family worship.

"I wish you would see me in my bed before you depart, Godfrey," entreated the old man, who seemed to cling with childish weakness to the presence of his grandson.

"With pleasure, sir," replied Mr. Dulanie, rising to assist the old man.

"Good night, my dear Agnes! God bless and reward you for all your goodness!" he said, pressing the hand of his young nurse.

"Not good night yet, sir. I shall look in before you sleep, and then you are quite comfortable."

"Thank you, thank you, my dear," said Hugh Hawe, as, leaning on the strong arm of his grandson, he left the room and the parlor into his chamber.

Godfrey assisted him in undressing, helped him into bed, and arranged his pillows and covering comfortably about him. Then, as the old man's request, he sat down beside him, and conversed with him in a low, quiet tone, when he arose to take leave, and, with the promise to return at the first morning's dawn, and to leave to the Hills, he stood awhile with his grandfather, left the room, and, with a heavy, mournful step, went down the stood awaiting his use, and rode off for Alabaster.

After his departure, Agnes arose from her seat by the fireside, and passed into the parlor, and from room, according to promise, to see if he were comfortable. The old man was lying so quietly, with his eyes closed and his hands folded upon his breast, that she thought he was sleeping, and shaded the light with her hand, but its glare should startle him. But he was already awake, and as she approached, he opened his eyes and said—

"I am not asleep, Agnes, my dear."

"But I do anything for you, sir?" she inquired, gently.

"No, my child."

"Then, do you feel after your day up?"

"Better than for a long time past, dear; better than I should, as well as in the flesh; Agnes, I feel satisfied—I feel as if the Lord had accepted my late sacrifice."

"Doubtless he has, dear sir. Are you wakeful?

—if so, shall I sit beside you and read, or sing you to sleep?"

"Thank you, dear girl. I am not wakeful, but I am not sleepy; nevertheless, if you please, you may sit by me for a few minutes, and sing, in your own sweet voice, your favorite hymn, 'I would not live always.'"

Agnes seated herself, and commenced, in a low tone of voice, to sing those beautiful but impressive stanzas. The singing occupied no more than six minutes, and by the time the last verse was finished, the old man was in a deep and placid slumber.

She stooped over him to coarse herself of this. His eyes were calmly closed; his lips gently compressed; his features tranquil, and his whole aspect serene as that of sleeping infancy.

Agnes, with a smile on her face, turned and departed, Agnes, as shading the light with her hand, she softly glided from the room, and closed the door behind her.

The fires were all out, the servants were all retired to their quarters, and the house was dark, silent, quiet, and gloomy. Agnes seemed the first person to notice the cold weather, and proceeded to her own room, which was immediately over that of old Hugh Hawe. She offered up her prayers to God, and then blew out her candle and retired to bed.

But, from some strange reason, she could not sleep; never had the solitude, silence and gloom of the old house so oppressed her spirits. She was a stateless, dark and stormy winter night, and the sighing of the wind through the wild mountain passes, and among the old beeches and elms of the glebe roots, sounded like the prophetic wail of the banshee of Ireland. A great, unaccountable dread of approaching evil, a deep impression of impending misfortune, overcame her, a dark and shadowing of some impending horror, weighed heavily upon her and; a wild impulse to start up and fly from the lonely house, seized upon her. In vain she reasoned, prayed and struggled to subdue this tremendous influence of the spirits; for hours she turned and turned in wakefulness, or tossed about in frightful dreams. It must have been some time after midnight when she fell into the deep sleep of exhaustion from which she was suddenly shocked—shocked by a single, prolonged, appalling cry of—

"Murder!"

That cry brought every soul in the house, the neighborhood were almost on death, and dark as the grave! From the thick night without, no sound came to the ear, and starlight shone from the windows. In the death-like stillness of the house that cry seemed unheard.

Yes! hark! a voice that does but make the silence more awful! and that voice is Agnes the Darke! Agnes, as it slowly and solemnly strikes—one!—two!—three!—four!—five!—six!—seven!—eight!—for at midnight many people are yet astir—Agnes, as she counts the strokes of the clock in the stillness of a vault. Then almost to a minute two hours after midnight, rang out that terrible cry, which had not yet ceased to echo through her ear, and brain, and heart! All was again silence, deep, dark, awful. Yet Agnes shook at the sign fit, and the cold sweat of mortal terror broke out upon her forehead. Some unusual thing had seemed an eternity all the fearful features of her position started up before her. A young, light, and active girl, she never minded the time in making a fleure of the mountains. The negroes attached to the premises were all buried in deep sleep in distant cabins. No cry from that low house could reach them. Agnes was alone, could count upon only their death-like sleep! What could be done? Wife de Sought—

"Oh, God! oh, God of heavens! what could was that!

A low, subdued, floundering struggle, a half suffocated groan, and a fall!

Agnes sprang up from immediately under her own—from the chamber of old Hugh Hawe!

Paralyzed by terror, she stood for a moment, and then, as the sounds in a dream, she felt her tent death, to the helpless old man below, all personal fear was conquered! Quickly striking a light, she hurried from the room out into the blank passage way, down the windy staircase, and through the cheerless lower hall into the parlor.

So far all was yet dark and still—the feeble rays of her own taper making the darkness more visible, the thick echo of her own footsteps making the silence more apparent.

She poured an instant in the parlor, which remained so exactly as it had been left, locked so quiet, were such an aspect of domestic peace, that she could imagine an awful disturbance near, and was almost persuaded to believe her alarm to have been a mere nightmare dream.

She opened the connecting door between the parlor and Mr. Hawe's chamber, and there—!!

Heavens and earth! what a vision was that which met her appalled gaze, from the very blood in her veins, and turned her form to stone!

Prone on his floor, with his limbs doubled under him so as to bring each over were, and his hair wet with blood, lay old Hugh Hawe, in his chamber floor. Spots of blood were tracked from the bed to the window, and from the door to the Hills, he gems of an outstretched, bloody hand, as if endeavoring to reach the window-sill, and then stopped. What a dread struggle for life were visible everywhere about the room!

Shocked nearly out of her awful spectacle, the panic-stricken girl caught a momentary glimpse of the figure of a man escaping through the open window!

For one instant she stood transfixed with horror, and then—nothing to the old—must, she asked the poor, gray head, that helplessly fell back upon the floor, with its long, ghastly gash across the throat; and the pale, sunken face, quivering in the last death agony!

"Oh, God! my God! who hath done this?" she cried.

The convulsed eyelids flared back, the twitching lips opened, and in spasmodic syllables uttered a name that filled Agnes with fear, but remained of evasion—then closed forever in death.

Rushing from the room, she rushed out into the night, waking all the mountain echoes with her terrific screams.

In five minutes the whole plantation was aroused, and in seven they were on the scene of action. The old man was dead; but the house was ransacked, and all the negroes—men, women and children.

They hurried into the chamber of the tragedy, and then ensued a scene that baffles all attempts at description!

All servants knelt over their dead master, mourning, weeping and howling: as only negroes can do. Children, terrified by the cries of the older negroes wished to raise the murdered man and by him upon his bed. But the gentleman surveying the direction of affairs, forbade them to move him or to meddle with anything in the room, until the arrival of the coroner.

Then the coroner proceeded to send a mounted messenger to summon a jury, and to send another to Piedmont to request the presence of Colonel Shannon; a third to Alabaster to summon the coroner, and a fourth to the village inn to bring Mr. Dulanie, if, perchance, he should not as yet have started on his journey.

So far the course of Hayhurst was as judicious as he purely could be. The coroner arrived, and was quickly completed with, and the parties arrived as promptly as time and distance would permit them to do.

First came Colonel Shannon, who reached the house about an hour after the coroner's arrival; after him Godfrey Dulanie, pale and horror-stricken at the sad and unexpected news of his friend's death, who appeared overwhelmed with sorrow and indignation at the foul deed of which he was a member of men from the village, whom he had summoned to act as jurymen.

Then a few minutes after sunrise the jury was empaneled and the investigation began. The coroner's examination of the premises was first business announced.

That Agnes Darke was called; but she was not in the room, nor in the house, nor in the overseer's cottage, nor in any of the negro cabins, and no one knew about the premises where she was long and vainly sought for.

While the searchers were in quest of her, other witnesses were examined.

Godfrey Dulanie was called, who testified to leaving the deceased, in his usual state, quietly and comfortably in bed at about the hour of the previous night; the only other person to his knowledge in the house at that time being Agnes Darke. Mr. Dulanie testified also to the fact that the only available document behind in the house, and having allowed the paper on his writing-desk, which he was hastening back to recover it when he was met by the messenger with the terrible news of the murder.

The next witness was Dr. Henry, who testified to the fact that he had been sent for by the old man the day previous left the prisoner in his usual poor health, and in company with Agnes Darke and Mr. Dulanie and his ward Miss Darke.

Then Mr. Simmons was the coroner; Mr. Hayhurst, who deposed that not more after two o'clock that morning he had been roused from sleep by a violent knocking at his house-door, and on his window-pane calling shrieks; that he had started up and opened the door, when a negro man, one of Mr. Hawe's, had come to him in a state bordering on distraction; that he gathered rather from her terrified looks and frantic exclamations, than from any coherent account that she gave, that Agnes had been assassinated in his chamber; that, immediately, summoning his family and neighbors, any who had also been aroused by her shrieks and who were hastening up, he had gone to the house where he found the deceased lying murdered, the window open, and all things in the same state in which they appeared at present, except that he had last no time in summoning the proper persons. He further testified that he was impressed that the negroes were incapable of giving evidence, and that only other witness, Agnes Darke, could not be found.

So after another hour passed in sifting the testimony and examining the same evidence of the still life in the chamber, the jury made up their verdict—

"Found murdered by a person or persons unknown."

Godfrey Dulanie, as before-time, remained at the house of Hayhurst, and buried in deep sleep in the distant cabins. No cry from that low house could reach them. Agnes, therefore, could count upon only their death-like sleep! What could be done? Wife de Sought—

"Oh, God! oh, God of heavens! what could was that!

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So far all was yet dark and still—the feeble rays of her own taper making the darkness more visible, the thick echo of her own footsteps making the silence more apparent.

She poured an instant in the parlor, which remained so exactly as it had been left, locked so

After the funeral, upon the succession of Dr. Henry and Mr. Sprole the Allanton lawyer, that a will had been made in favor of the former, the alleged instrument was everywhere sought, but in vain. No will of any description was to be found.

And after considerable delay, Godfrey Dalzell entered his belle-à-tête into his possession. Not wishing to alienate his patrimonial estate of Farquier's Folly, he warned the tenant, Dr. Henry, that as the close of his term of lease he should be required to give up the premises. But at the same time Godfrey Dalzell acted with characteristic magnanimity, and gave his cousin a deed of Hawke's Hole with the farm attached.

Besides this gift, Mr. Dalzell would have settled a comfortable independence upon Agnes Darke, who, by the death of her guardian, was left quite destitute.

But the orphan girl, without making the slightest acknowledgment of the kindness of that intention, and even with flouting scorn, had determined to accept the least assistance from him.

Every one who knew of this event thought her manner of refusing all from him, to say the least of it, unpardonable; but they attributed it to the excitement, and excused her upon account of her recent illness, which—

Agnes—shuddered and kept her own counsel!

But the Honorable Godfrey Dalzelle was now an eminent character. As a rising young member of the opposition, and a lauded aristocrat, he was considered a desirable match even for Miss Conrad, in Paule, and before his return to Washington he was invited to dissolve her pecuniary trouble. It could be met his betrothed, but with subdued joy, for he felt that while all was brightly changed for them, as at what an awful price had been purchased their present happiness.

CHAPTER XII.

A RUSE.

Bring flowers, fresh flowers, for the bride to wear!
They were born to deck the beautiful and fair;
She is leaving home and all her childish sports,
She is laying down her garlands and her toys,
Her glass and her doll, for other cares and joys.
Bring flowers for the locks of the fair young bride.
HEMANS.

Since the mysterious murder of the miser, twelve months had passed away, and yet not the slightest clew to the perpetrators of the unnatural crime had been discovered.

Godfrey Dalzell, in default of the existence of a will, remained in quiet possession of his grandfather's estate.

Doctor Henry, whose lease had not yet expired, continued to reside at Farquier's Folly, to practice his profession, and with golden opinions from all sorts of people."

But what was most strange, his lovely young wife, from the day of the miser's dreadful death, had taken into the profoundest state of melancholy, that so effected her health as to make the constant attendance of an intelligent nurse absolutely necessary to her safety.

Agnes Darke, having resolved rather than lead a life of idleness and dependence, to earn her bread by any honest occupation, however humble, willingly accepted the situation of nurse to Gertrude's invalid lady, and now resided at Farquier's Folly.

Godfrey Dalzelle had grown in favor with earth, and heaven. His position as the most eminent of the ruling party claimant of the vacant universally acknowledged; his rank as one of the most important members of the intellectual and moral aristocracy of the state was fully established; just "seventy and ten" days, from the 4th of March—his election as the accepted lover, and affianced husband of Honora Paule, was openly recognized.

Christmas approached, at which holy and happy season the marriage was appointed to be solemnized.

Godfrey Dalzelle was at this time fulfilling the duties of his official station at Washington; but he was expected to arrive at Piedmont on Christmas Eve, the night before that set for the wedding.

It was arranged that the bridal pair should spend one week in magical fairy-land, and then, in the good old-fashioned way, giving and receiving entertainments. And then they would go to Piedmont, proceed to Washington City where the official duties of the bridegroom would require his presence, and where apartments were to be pre-engaged at one of the best hotels.

Every one was preparing to be present at Piedmont, for the marriage of the heiress of that house.

"All," exclaimed the gentry, "would be there, as informed by many of those particulars—" Ah! half the state of Virginia knew what was going on there that week."

Godfrey Dalzelle and Honora Paule would both have willingly waived all this ceremonious, but Madam Anderly would have a grand wedding, and to the question "—" digest of the thing," was to her the circumstance a matter of comparatively little importance, they did not think proper to oppose the will of the old lady.

Honora, accompanied by her grandmother, her uncle and one of her cousins, arrived at the hotel a proper hour. Then Madam Anderly was most lovely, as well as most courteous, as of those of her granddaughter Honora. She purchased and pressed upon her acceptance the most costly dresses, shawls, laces, jewels, &c., that were to be found in Baltimore. These were duly packed and dispatched to Piedmont. A celebrated fashionable mantuamaker, and a French cook and confectioner were also engaged, to go down to Allanton, to officiate on the occasion. The mission to the city over, Madam Anderly, Madam Anderly and her party returned home.

And the remaining week preceding the marriage was one of unprecedented hilarity and bustle. In an upper room a company of dressmakers and plain seamstresses worked under the direction of the city milliner. In the kitchen and pantry a squad of scullions toiled in the service of the French cook and confectioner. Then was Madam Anderly and her fair grand-daughters any less busily engaged. Their taste and skill governed the whole operation, Honora Conrad Shannon's services were called into requisition to write and direct two hundred notes of invitation, which were conferred not only among all the visiting acquaintances of the family throughout the country and the adjoining states, but also distributed to distant friends and relatives residing in Richmond, Baltimore and Washington. As many of these guests were expected to remain over night, chambers were prepared for their accommodation. And as this was an occasion of *etiquette*, you may judge, reader, that the heavy Marseilles counterpanes, with harsh corners to pinch, and porcelain bolster services, and the fields embroidered muslin bed and window curtains, were all pressed to adorn the guest chambers.

As the important day approached the weather became very fine.

Christmas Eve was a delightful winter day, clear and cold with a crisp frost; the ground was covered with snow, lightly frozen and affording the best sleighing, and therefore permitting a large number of guests, even from a distance.

And in fast as early as the middle of the afternoon the sleighs full of company began to arrive.

At this hour the younger ladies were all invisible, being closeted with the milliners in the room adjoining the bride's chamber, engaged in putting the finishing touches to their evening costume.

But Madam Anderly was in the family parlor below stairs to receive her guests. And her cousin Ruby was in waiting to attend them to their several chambers.

The elegantly furnished drawing-rooms were not as yet, lighted up and thrown open.

Mr. Dalzelle, and his friend Mr. Brent, were expected to arrive at six o'clock. The marriage ceremony was to be solemnized at seven, and to be followed by a ball.

The two younger Misses Anderly were to be the attendants of the bride; and Mr. Brent and Doctor Helm were to be those of the bridegroom. The Bishop of the diocese, who was on a visit to Grace Church Parsonage, for the purpose of confirming a numerous number of the church, was to perform the marriage ceremony. Colonel Shannon was to give away the bride.

Then Honora and Godfrey met! and for a single moment, all was forgotten.

They had not seen each other for months, and now took a few syllables could be uttered in the hurried moments of which they were passing from the foot of the stairs to the door of the saloon, before the gentleman was ushered into the heroin' deep love.

"Is it true, my adored bride?" he exclaimed, in a voice subdued but thrilling with impassioned earnestness, as he pressed her hand to his heart, "is it true, my worshiped one! my queen! are you not! are you not?"

"Yes, my own, happier in that dear name than I could be in any title, were titles for me!" she answered, in the most tender accents, and with a look of pure, profound and passionate for discrimination.

My own, my own, my wife—"

"For life and death, and eternity!"

They had now come up with their attendants when the whole party passed before the entrance of the saloon.

CHAPTER XIII.

A WEDDING WITHOUT A "TUTE."

All things that are, are subject to decay,
And from their ruin other to blaze forward:
Our instruments to our mutations sway,
Our wedding chain in a sad fatal knot;
Our fortunes, our affections, the affects
Our bridal flowers to deck a hateful corpse;
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change.
SHAKESPEARE.

The doors were immediately thrown open, revealing a gorgeously adorned, brilliantly lighted, and well filled suite of drawing rooms, thrown by the folding doors into one grand saloon.

Amid a general murmur of admiration, the bridal party entered the saloon, and passed through a narrow passage opened for them through the crowd, and took their station, forming a semi-circle in the cleared space before the bishop, who took in hand, stood upon the rug.

Then all the eyes and all eyes in the two drawing rooms end in the hall beside them were fixed upon the bridal party, the bridegroom, the bishop opened the book, and, amid a profound silence, began the impressive and solemn ceremony—*viz.*, direful cases!—the service for the burial of the dead!

But at the same instant that the solemn words fell upon the ears of the bridal pair, thrilling their hearts with awful emotion, a loud noise and before the sound could reach the senses of more distant persons, a sudden, and terrific shock of the whole of their natural lives—aye! and their eternity pains and trials for the good, with him she would have shared them also, that she might assist and help to prove her love; and now, in the noonday of her prosperity, all the inner lights went out in the radiant sunshine of one intense joy—the joy of becoming for time and for eternity, the wife of Godfrey Dalzelle.

So Honora Paule, with soul overflowing with love and gratitude to God for the gift of such a man, the sudden opening of the door and the fluttering entrance of her two bridesmaids, with the hasty but finishing touches to their own rich toilets, and now appeared in full dress or white satin blond lace, pearl necklaces, bracelets, and wreaths of white roses.

"Honora, are you ready? Are you ready, Honora?" they simultaneously inquired.

"Quite," replied the bride, in a low voice and with a soft unconscious smile.

"Well, it wants just five minutes to seven! Mr. Dalzelle arrived nearly an hour ago, and was immediately shown to his chamber, where I suppose he is now. The time appointed for the ceremony is half-past seven, and the Bishop for the accomplishment of the bridal knot. Have you your bridal dance?" replied Rose.

"Oh, never fear! I suppose that just now all young and old—back to the saloon and the hall to witness the marriage ceremony. But when that is over and the bridal party, the clergyman, and Father Marmuly, the Catholic priest. Three ten persons of the male parlor, and the remaining number divide to the library, and sat down to arouse themselves in a game of chess, while waiting for supper.

Music sounded in the saloon, and the young gentlemen selected their partners, and formed themselves into a set for the first quadrille. Of course Honora would not. They would willingly have spared the bride, but her uncle, whom, in the bridal etiquette required them, upon this evening, to maintain a sort of equal state, and remain idle to be entertained; so that, to the vexation of all concerned, Mr. Brent and Miss Anderly, who would much rather have led the dancers, remained on duty near the newly-married lovers, who would for the quadrille," said Honora.

"What! neither yourself nor Mr. Dalzelle dance," exclaimed Rose, in surprise.

"No."

"And why, pray?"

"Because Mr. Dalzelle ever dances."

"Oh, I understand—" The Tenth don't dance; but since when have you given over such vanities?"

Honora smiled softly, but did not reply.

And just then a light rap at the door announced a visitor.

Jessie ran and opened it to admit Lily, who came to ask if the bride and her attendants were ready to descend.

"Ready! Yes, and 'almost waiting.'"

"Then, madam," said Lily, with a mock courtesy to her cousin, "the bridegroom and his friends stand at your pleasure, the bell tolls for—"

And Honora, with "a smile on her lip" and a prayer in her heart, left the chamber, and followed by her bride-maids, descended the stairs.

Waiting in the hall below, was a group of gentlemen, consisting of Mr. Dalzelle, accompanied above them all by his commanding stature and manly kingly countenance; Dr. Helm, whose learned and melancholy face was lighted up on casual acquaintance; Mr. Brent, whose general quiet as fine-looking a person as Miss Rose had described him to be; and finally Colonel Shannon, who, remembering that the Washingtonian was a stranger, brought him forward immediately and presented him to turn to the ladies.

One glance of involuntary admiration this gentleman cast upon the bride, and then, bowing profoundly, gave his arm to Miss Rose Anderly, and led the bridal procession. Dr. Helm, with a cordial invitation to the whole party, drew the gloved fingers of Miss Jessie over his broad cloth sleeve, and followed the others

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, JANUARY 16, 1858.

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A PICTURE.

A city is a great picture of human life, drawn with a medley of colors and a variety and minuteness of detail, that defy the most elaborate and vivid imagination of the mortal painter. Heard on the earth, surrounded by fields, and woods, and streams, canopied by the heaven, clad in sunshine and cloud—or flecked with stars, it is a little world in itself, where all classes and modes of virtue, all professions and pursuits, all virtues and vices, and all stages of fortune, happiness and misery are combined and condensed, as much, seemingly, for the astonishment of the clown, as for the contemplation of the philosopher.

How few, even of those who are born, and who live and die in the city, have any idea of what is going down, the extreme that meet in it, and the history, romance, tragedy and comedy of life that are to be met to moment, ever-changing, ever-new, at the city gushes out its boundaries, shifts the lineaments, and gorges or disgorges its fleeting generations. It is both a bright and a saddening picture of study. Bright, as one watches broad and long streets, and see fit, splendid edifices rising as though by magic, and equipages flashing and rolling, and gaily dressed throng or ascending the wings at crowded theatres, and all things moving as if under the influence of sunshine, good-fortune and gladness; saddening, as one looks down past all this glitter into the haunts and by-ways, where dwell poverty, misery, and squalor from a dark and pitiful back-ground.

The gold and sunset clouds, the sparkly, white and pence, are bloodied with the black and red hues of poverty, disorder and crime, and over against the band that dispenses charity or gives the warm grasp of friendship in need, are the murderer's dagger and the incendiary's torch and assassin's dagger. At a fête distance, or contemplated from an attitude that requires no effort, it seems a gilded bazaar, in which people, merchandize, fashions and habits of all climes are gathered together in strange confused row, like that of the sea-nest, then up day and night. Though studied for a life-time there seems still space, and behind the visible surface are mysteries of which the most can never grasp more than a faint glimpse.

And to stand in the midst of the city, and feel that all that animates this broad, busy world is within a half-century, to be renewed like the almost impenetrably flowering forest—figure and figure crumbling, but not the same—is a bitter conclusion of the scene. The cradle rocks against the coffin, the home joins the bridal couch, and down in the silence of the tomb the good, the bad, the happy, youth, manhood, infancy and old age lie in length buried, with all their vices and virtues, their joys and their sorrows, and are sometimes represented in miniature models and on panoramas, which men, women, and children rush to see at a price, but they are at this hurried and busy world fair, combined with real cities, as are those tiny rockets which attract eager boys and girls with their sparkles, compared with the eternal stars.

OVERHAUL THEM!

"Overhaul who?"

Why, your old clothes. How are you be content to let the moths turn those cast-off garments into useless straw, while you are buying new clothes to advertising in the streets? We take it for granted that you have no children of your own to wear them; or, if you have, you are too much above such impudence to put second-hand furniture on their backs. Why then, keep your old clothes any longer? Are you waiting for the "low season," with the purpose of exchanging them for something for which you will be required to pay ten times their real value, while losing your temper and your disposition in the bargain? Be wise, then, and change your mind, and send them to some poor widow, or worse than widow, who will gladly make them tax-coats, and pants, and frocks for her little ones. If you know of no such widow, just notify some charitable association of your readiness to entrust their distribution to them.

"I'm overhaul the contents of your clothes-closet! Do it the second you are done perusing this reminder. Should it meet your eye before you turn to "The Bride of an Evening," or either of the other absorbing stories, comply with its suggestion now: you get engaged in their perusal, and so forget the matter.

Oh, how welcome would be, to the shivering children of poverty, many a cast-off garment, or still more, or hat, or bonnet, or other article now a prey to moths and molds, in dark closets or warehouses, or even garrets, where they have not been seen for years.

Overhaul them places at once, readers of the Ledger, and enjoy the luxury of doing good with them in the mode whereof we have merely revealed you, for there is a luxury in doing good.

THE WONDER OF THE AGE.

The most wonderful phenomenon of the age, is the age itself. It is not only the new and latest generation, but new and at times almost incongruous benefits in its generation. So shifting, so varied, so progressive and startlingly quick with vital thoughts and actions, that the thickest and acutest continually confound one another. There was a time, even within the memory of those who have not grown gray, when a new idea, invention, or progress lived its day enjoyed a reputation, and was not heedlessly jogged to oblivion. That time is essentially gone by. The day of plodding, and nodding upon what one had accomplished—though it were never so great a thing—is over. There is no repose now but in the grave. Men and women all flout notions and rules; has changed its pace from a walk to a gallop, and he who would be leader, whether in arts, inventions, or arms, must ride faster than his fellows, or be trampled down, out sight of and forgotten.

Lightning and steam have not only superseded horse-power and wind, but with an astonishing revolution have whipped up and quickened the human brain, until the blows of the age are equally as rapid and fiery as those of the elements. Men are the means of transmitting them from brain to brain the world over. It is as though the very ploughs (not lying open) the great danger was brought to be ready for the seed and harvest of next—saw the difficulty it to go fast enough and soon enough. The fear, so groundless with our fathers, of the world being run out of inventions and enterprises were dangerous to the welfare, virtue and peace of society, is practically and completely exploded. Men have found the celestial secret of prosperity and happiness in the activity of the work of experiment; and the result of a few experiments, in spite of the old stand-still philosophy, confound from life to life and generation to generation, in all fields and professions. They have created and added to the world's wealth, and relieved it of its burdens, by the

THE OLD YEAR.

Written on the First of January.

BY GEORGE D. PRENTICE.

List! list! what tone was that which seemed to rise
Upon the wind of midnight? Nature sounds
No knell for such for the departed year,
Yet when the midnight hour proclaims the end
Of the by-gone eternity, I heard,
Echoed within the chambers of my soul,
A sound, mysterious the shadow of a sound,
Wild, strange and dismal, as it were a wail—
A low and hollow wail from all the years
And aspirations of ocean and of earth—
Upon the chilly air. Oh, was it not
The solemn voice of old eternity,
Chanting one requiem, one wild and deep lament,
For her dead child?

The year, alas! is gone
Forever from the world! His second tax strong,
Too mighty will to life. He laid his hand
On breathing millions, and they sank beneath
The frozen grave of the grave-yawning year.
He laid his hand on cities, and their hum
Became the silence of the dead. He laid his hand
And shades of sunless hell gave joy, they said,
Like Satan when red thrones on the chain; he passed
O'er earth, and, at each wave of his hand, signal
Volcanos, earthquake, whirlwind, storm and flood,
Sprang up beneath the silent spell, and wrought
The fearful crusade of their destiny;
The year, his very given minutes all fulfilled,
His tax on human pleasure with the dead,
There, there to sleep forever.

The old year,
Called forth from earth a blending of the sounds
Of sweet spring flowers—he warred his Autumn ward,
And they were not. He woke to human ears
Mysteries of hoarse and joyy and roaring tones,
That mocked his doings of immortality.
He mocked them, and they died. Another year
Is gone! a new one reigns! Its shadow lies
And what it darkly hides, a dreadful
And silent daguerre of its mysterious months.
We may not know—thank God we may not know
We only know that still each passing moment,
And day and hour, the low, deep wail of grief,
The saddened cry of agony, the shout
Of fiery ambition, the loud thunder shock
Of bloody conflict, and the knell of death
Will mark each to see brief moments, or
The cup of time, and then be swallowed up,
And lost in the dim shadowy gulf of
Of an unconscious and outgoing waste.

RICHARD HOFFMAN;

OR,

THE PEASANT AND THE NOBLEMAN.

A TALE OF LOW AND AFFECTION.

CHAPTER I.

London excites wonder and admiration when viewed in the mass, but expands when studied in detail. It is impossible for the most accurate to thread its streets without being struck by the hum of busy life—the well-dressed crowds, pursuing like a continual stream in every direction—the glaring shops—the well-appointed equipages—the prosperity laden wan, transporting the world's merchandise from one point of the metropolis to the other—unmistakable signs of industry, prosperity and wealth.

This is the picture as Claude might have painted it—sunny, bright and cheering; but Rembrandt would have touched the shades in a widely different manner—his view would have been taken at night, when, dreary, lonely, hunger and reckless crime emerge from their retreat, imitating the Bohemian's instinct in seeking their prey in darkness.

Thousands of our readers, we presume, have heard of a thoroughfare running parallel with the Thames, in London, and known as the Rotherhithe road.

At the period at which our tale commences, the houses in the above locality were of the meanest and shabbiest description, and inhabited chiefly by sawyers or draymen, employed in the wood-yards and breweries, and also, we regret to add, by a far less respectable description of characters—ruffians from justice.

Before passing under the arch of Waterloo Bridge, which intersects it about midway, the Rotherhithe road takes a sprightish turn, exerting a large semi-circular piece of ground, occupied as a timber-yard, at the back of which stands a row of low-built cottages, forming a still smaller crescent.

One of these cottages had been inhabited for several years by an exceedingly poor family, named Hoffman; and yet the Hoffmans had no right to be poor, for the father was industrious, well-educated man, thoroughly conversant with accounts, and possessed of no small capacity for business. Unfortunately there was one drawback—disappointment had made him a drunkard; in his moody humour he frequently carved destiny instead of his wounding vice for his misfortunes, and wondered why everything failed with him. A child might have given him the key of the enigma.

At the age of twenty-six, Thomas Hoffman had married Rachel Bentley, the only child of a wealthy city merchant, in whose counting-house he had been reared. Although the marriage took place during the absence of his father in India, where the affairs of the firm had called him, it was not altogether a clandestine one, for the mother of the bride gave her consent and approval to it by her presence.

It would be difficult to decide whether indignation or surprise predominated most in the heart of Mr. Bentley, when, on his arrival in England, he found his daughter the wife of one of his clerks. Apart from the inequality of the match, it destroyed the cherished hope of the old gentleman of uniting her to his nephew, Cuthe Keaton, a junior partner in the house.

Although the merchant really loved his child, he had never been very demonstrative in his feelings; pride and affection were both concealed, and anger is an unwise counsellor.

You have chosen for yourself," he said, in answer to Rachel's passionate entreaties for forgiveness. "You had your mother's fortune; and, it seems, was of little consequence. The wife of my clerk, George Hoffman," he added, coldly, "cannot remain under my roof. Her home is beneath her husband's. I leave London for three days, on a visit to my old friend Thornton. On my return, I shall not expect to find you here."

"Oh, father!—dear father!" sobbed the poor girl, in an agony of grief.

"It would not alter my determination," observed her father, coldly.

With these harsh words he quitted the room, and proceeded at once to the counting-house, where his first act was to send for his son-in-law into his private office, and dismiss him from his employment; his next, to pay him the sum of a thousand pounds, the amount of a legacy which a distant relative had left to Rachel.

"I had hoped," observed the young man, deeply stung by the proceeding, "that you would have acted more generously, sir, and permitted me at least to retain my situation. I have served you faithfully."

A sneer, expressive of doubt, curled the lips of Mr. Bentley.

"Have you anything to urge against my character, sir?" demanded the speaker, proudly.

"An accountant has gone through the books," replied the merchant, deliberately, and everything appears to be correct."

"Everything *is* correct, I will answer on my law, impudently.

"I trust so," was the calm rejoinder; "and the house will give you the usual reference in the event of your obtaining another situation; though probably," added the speaker, in a sarcastic tone, "you will prefer independent service by my account."

"Probably," repeated George Hoffman, carelessly, for he felt that he was harshly used. "Good morning, sir."

One person besides the two whom we have just introduced to our readers, had been present at the interview—Peter Mangles, the eldest clerk in the establishment. He and Richard Bentley had been born together, and, independent of the relation of servant and employer, the strictest friendship united them. Whatever Peter did was sure to be well done. He had all the accurate of a Dutchman in his fingers' ends, and, on more than one occasion, had rendered eminent services by his vigilance, knowledge of the money market, and great aptitude for business.

In person Peter Mangles was exceedingly thin, and had a slight stoop, doubtless from his many years' labor at the desk; his features were sharp, intelligent, and marked by great benevolence; there was an almost child-like simplicity in his manners, and a slight cloak of eccentricity about him out of business. Probably, because he was a bachelor, many considered him without one tie or interest in the world. They were in error; the counting-house was his world; he knew no other.

As the speaker was quitting the private office, Mr. Bentley called him up from his desk and pronounced his name.

George Hoffman turned.

"I am sorry you are about to leave us," said Peter, extending his hand to him—a thing he had never done before during the number of years they had known each other. "You are a great talent for business, only a little too speculative; but that is the fault of youth. Good bye," he added; "if ever you require a friend, you know where to find one."

"Thank you! thank you, Mr. Mangles," replied the young man in a tone which showed he was not insensible to kindness, especially at such a moment. "You, I am sure, never advised that an accountant should be sent for to examine my books."

"No! *Certainly* not."

"You believe me honest?"

"As honest as my lodger," replied the old clerk, emphatically, at the same time striking the book before him with the open palm of his hand; "and if my one double it, tell them that Peter Mangles said so."

This was a proud testimony to his integrity. George Hoffman felt it as such, and his heart beat lighter as he quitted the private office of his father-in-law and late employer.

Mr. Bentley felt doubly dissatisfied; in the first place with himself, for conscience whispered that he had acted hastily in his child's case, and in accord with his confidential clerk, whose conduct annoyed him.

"I think you might have chosen some more fitting place," he said, with considerable asperity, "to display his stolen ebullition of friendship for one who has so deeply wronged me."

"But not a more pitying one," observed the old man, mildly.

"And you still believe George Hoffman to be honest?" added the merchant.

Peter Mangles nodded his head affirmatively.

"Despite the missing securities for ten thousand pounds, which unfortunately are negotiable in India," continued the speaker, bitterly.

Peter scratched his right ear, a habit he had contracted when annoyed or perplexed, and, to do him justice, the state of the money-market puzzled him.

"Can't make it out!" he said, at last; "can't but I shall do so one day. Never rested for a week after the loss. One thing, however, is certain, your son-in-law knows nothing about them; he never had the keys of the iron safe in his possession an instant."

"Were the securities ever there?" demanded his employer, doubtfully.

The clerk appeared painfully surprised.

"Placed them there myself," he exclaimed; "took the keys home with me, and slept with them, as I have done for the last five-and-twenty years, under my pillow; in the morning they were gone; there are only two sets of keys," he added, "*yours and ours*. Did you take yours with you to India?"

"No."

"That was wrong."

"I left them," said Mr. Bentley, "in the secret drawer of my cabinet, where I found them on my return. George Hoffman must have been frequently at the house, and—"

"Rubbish!" interrupted the accurate. "I tell you he is honest. I have watched him from a boy; always found his petty cash-book right to a farthing. You may just as well suspect me, as he is confident."

"In fact, I am not quite certain you do not; one has sometimes greatly doubts to soothe."

"It is you who are guilty of injustice now," said the merchant, with a smile; "but I forgive you, for you mean well. We must not quarrel."

"I am not quite so sure of that," observed Peter Mangles, in a tone in which wounded feeling and anger seemed to contend; "in fact, Richard Bentley, I begin to feel that we should not have quarrel; I shall be better after it. I am certain something dreadful will happen to the firm," he continued, "if we do not; for whilst you were talking to poor George in that unchristian, unbusinesslike manner, I made a memorandum in the margin and two blots! two blots, sir!—two on the same page!" he exclaimed, looking back for the last twenty years, and you will not find such a disgraceful thing; and all through you, Richard," he added, reproachfully—"all through you!"

In his excitement the speaker had quitted his stool at the desk, and as he stood in the centre of the room a singular resemblance might be traced in his appearance to that of a respectable jackdaw —*attached one, of course*. His thin legs, cased in tight black pantaloons and well polished boots beneath, the head and shoulders bending forward, and the palms of the hands crossed behind the back of his narrow-tailed body-coat.

"You forget my feelings," answered his employer. "Rachel has broken my heart."

"Pride is breaking it," muttered the old clerk.

"Pride!" repeated Peter.

"Beggar!" repeated Peter. "I see we must quarrel; there is no help for it. Beggar! when were you when a foolish but true friend lost you all but his enormous business with? Come, Hoffman has all that you then possessed—industry, talent, and integrity. Discard him, discard your child, if you will; but, mark my words, he will make a bright man of business yet! It was not without good reason, I feel assured, although I have not the slightest idea what they were, that your late wife consented to the marriage; she was a good woman, Richard, and—"

"I cannot listen to this, even from you," exclaimed the merchant, angrily. "Let us drop the subject."

"But I can't drop it! I won't drop it!" replied the former, nervously. "You have disappointed me sadly, Richard; I knew you were as obstinate as a mule, but never suspected before that you could be positively wicked. Your conduct, I repeat, is selfish as a father, unlike a man of business. When a house fails, no sensible creditor closes the account by throwing the acceptances into the fire. No; he sells fire a dividend, and Rachel's manager, probably, will still pay your bills and sue-lings in the pound."

"Peter!" said Mr. Bentley could not avoid smiling at an argument drawn from the daily pursuits of the speaker.

"I am sane in his senses," continued the old man, "unless he sailed to ruin him, have given Cuthe Keaton and Georgy's stake of ten thousand pounds?"

"It was his right, Peter," observed the merchant.

"No, it was not. Rachel is not yet of age. It will be the last to assert the illegality of the calculations must prove false, for his brain is so muddled that I will be surprised if he knows how he gambled. I feel much better now; I have relieved my mind, and, as for you, sir," he added, "you ought to quarrel with you, and it's done. There are the keys of the iron safe, Mr. Bentley; there are his—he knows nothing about them; he never had the keys of the iron safe in his possession an instant."

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"No! no! Richard," he said to say, whenever the subject was broached, "I am very well as I am; have more money than I know how to spend. I have got a good-sized house, but I should lose all confidence in myself were I a principal. You will find me much better as your clerk than your partner. And a clerk be remained.

As Peter Mangles predicted, the thousand pounds proved an injury rather than a benefit to George Hoffman and his sorrowing wife. Instead of taking a situation, the young man started in business on his own account. For some time he struggled bravely; a helping hand might have saved him, and changed embarrassment into prosperity; but there was no one to stretch it forth. Despite his exertions, the result came at last, and brought ruin in its train.

The creditors, satisfied that he had acted honourably by them, agreed that the shame of sending his name in the *Gazette*, contented themselves with taking everything, and left him a beggared man.

There is a latent struggle—a power of endurance, in woman's nature, unknown to man—unsuspected even by herself, until the hour of trial calls it forth to exercise a healing ministry, pour the sweet balm of consolation on the wounds the world has irritated, heal the galled mind, and whisper future hope.

Such a consoling angel did Rachel prove to her unhappy husband. Never had she appeared more cheerful, or smiled upon him so tenderly, as in the hour of misfortune. The task was a painful one, but a wife's and mother's love sustained her; and if at times, when alone in the cheerless lodging to which they had removed, the heart-broken girl felt her, a glance at the cradle of her first-born recalled it.

For several months George Hoffman remained without employment. To a mind naturally active, idleness is a dreadful counsellor. In poor or rich, it matters not which. It generally leads to vice, unless the brain be occupied. It was the beginning, in morality of its tone, and manhood of its energy.

It was not long before the unhappy man yielded to the sad influence, which betrayed its presence in the most distressing form, by leading him to drink.

Frequently would he receive to break the fast of food, and promise his wife, who felt both shocked and grieved, to abstain from the fatal beverage; drunkard which stole away his reason; but the strength, unfortunately for his happiness, was too cunningly mixed—a band he could not see proved it, and his promises were no sooner made than broken.

In consequence of this degrading vice, its wretched victim lost situation after situation, till at last he could procure no regular employment, and became reduced to write for a few stationers in Parliament-street, who only gave him work occasionally; for the man had a staff of steady, respectable writers, whose regularity he could depend upon, and he felt it a duty not to let them remain idle.

Such was the state of affairs when Richard Bentley, in the social scale, till they took up their abode in the cottage in the Rotherhithe-road, where a second child, a girl, was born in poverty and misery.

On more than one occasion an appeal had been made to the humanity feelings of Mr. Bentley, not to be continued inexorable. His pride was too deeply wounded, he said, to relent.

Frequently, when returning home of an evening from the city, she would encounter her father-in-law and his son-in-law and a worthless companion named Styles, whom he had turned from his employ for trampling, rudely, in the street-drunk, and on the night had so disgusted him that his heart revolted from even pity. Little did the father of Rachel imagine that these encounters had been severely arranged, and still less did he suspect by whom.

Equal care had been taken that Peter Mangles should remain ignorant of their existence. He had grieved the old man sadly; for he had a horror of drunkenness and its unbecoming. The merchant, in his nature, however, did not allow him to abandon Hoffman, when he continued to smile from time to time, sparingly indeed, for fear her husband should regard the money in dissipation, but always with words of good advice, and without solicitation.

It is now time that we should speak of the offspring of this unhappy marriage—we do not use the term unhappy in the ordinary acceptation of the word, for affection yet lingered in the hearts of both. Despite his habits of intemperance, George still fondly loved his wife, who never forgot, even in the hardest of her trials, that he was the father of her youth, the husband of her choice, the father of her children. There was the tie, the golden link in affection's chain which bound her: had it been true, it must long since have broken.

Richard, the eldest of the children—he had been named after his grandfather—was now in his thirteenth year; and despite the privation in which he had been reared, not only a handsome, but a well-grown, healthy boy. He had his father's intelligence, open brow and clustering hair, joined with his mother's deep blue, thoughtful eyes, and much of the gentle, affectionate disposition; the strength was in his heart. Nature had done more for him than education. To be sure he could read and write, and possessed a slight knowledge of arithmetic. There his attainments ended.

Devotedly fond of his mother and little sister Mary—a fairy-like, lovely child, now six years old —Richard felt every sacrifice in his power to alleviate the sorrow he shared, and render their home less cheerless during the frequent absence of his father at the tavern.

"I shall soon be strong enough to work for both of you," he frequently exclaimed, "and then there shall be no more want."

On hearing this, Mary would clap her tiny hands, laugh, and make him promise to buy her a new frock, rabbit and plum-cake, as a reward.

There is something noble as well as touching in the love of a fine manly boy for his mother. It is the grand sapling which may one day become a staff for her declining years, and repay—ah! to possible for a child ever to repay these—the cares and sorrows lavished upon his infant years. It is a bright promise—a gem of like sparkling dew of a happy future.

CHAPTER II.

But whilst in peace sinking
Within a cheerful home,
We feel as sin and err!
Oh! then, to darkness come;
But let them not be overpowered
As wholesome every the sun—
Oh! let us not be weighed down
Since paying God, in thee.
MRS. HEMANS.

It was the last day of the parting year, and the Hoffmans were seated at the small round breakfast in their clean and humble cottage. George, whose eyes were still bloodshot, had just returned from the scene of the preceding night, refused to eat anything, although he eagerly drank his tea his patient wife poured out for him. True, it was exceedingly weak—but it quenched his burning thirst, and calmed the feverish excitement which caused his hand to shake as he raised the cup to his lips.

There was very little bread and no butter on the table; the money which should have purchased a fresh supply had been spent at the tavern. Rachel divided it sharply between the children, reserving only a small crust for herself.

"I am not hungry, mother," whispered her son, perhaps in consideration for her, "I had a good piece of bread and cheese at the public-house."

"You are hungry, too young to comprehend the misery around her, began eagerly to eat her share.

"Richard," said his father, in a melancholy sigh, at a reproach, even when it is an indirect one.

"You were playing with Jack Manders last night," he continued, after a pause of a few minutes; "don't let me hear that you do so again."

"Why, father?" said the boy, startled, respectfully; for his mother had studiously inculcated in his youthful mind the lesson of obedience.

"I like Jack," exclaimed Mary, laughingly; "he gave me a cake last night."

"You should not have taken it," said George Hoffman.

"O, but I like cakes," replied the child, *"and was so hungry."*

Poor-hearted the little speaker in her arms to prevent her saying more, and did not even regard her husband's woman-like; she wished to spare him the mortification, and, sinking on a chair, she was nearly satisfied, but persevered in her questions.

"Why don't you like Jack?" she asked.

"Because his father was a thief, my love," was the reply; "he will end his days on the gallows, I believe, in a returned convict. He is training his nephew badly."

Rachel did not exactly understand what the words thief and convict meant.

Throughout the rather conversation on the subject, George Hoffman rose from the breakfast-table, and, with his hat in his hand, was preparing to quit himself, and proceeded to a smaller one, covered with low papers, near the window. Several times he endeavored to write, but in vain; at last he threw it impatiently to proceed.

Rachel knew by bitter experience what setting him right meant. The tavern! the drunk!

The unhappy young man had given up his hat and quitted the cottage, without daring to cast a look on those whom he had so cruelly injured. He felt that a curse was on his circumstances, unfortunately, but of little consequence; he could almost have blessed it, as the "Queen of Society," of Westminster, his colliging friend, Styles, being absent from London.

And yet the dupe continued blind!

"You will wait for my return, Richard, said his mother, after her husband had departed, she fixed on the possible consequences of her son's intimacy with Jack Manders, and resolved to put any sacrifice—even to that of parting with him—to put an end to it.

The boy promised; and Rachel, taking the last thinket she possessed—a locket, containing her father's hair—proceeded to the pawnbroker's, where to leave the house to dispose of it. The rent was due to the day, and she had not a shilling to assist it. As the broken-hearted creature gazed on the miniature of her father, memory recalled the past, and the love that had surrounded her there, crowded upon her, memory's and feeling's luminous forms, and, sinking on a chair, she wept bitterly.

"Mother, mother," exclaimed her son, throwing his arms around her neck and kissing her; "I will never hear to see it!"

"Richard!" answered his parent.

"For me!"

"Should you yield to temptation, follow the example of your father, and—and—become, like him, a thief, it would kill me."

"No fear of that, mother," replied the boy, drawing himself proudly up; "I would starve first. But I can't—I won't see you starve," he added, with an inner sigh, "if I can get work."

"Honestly," sobbed Rachel, "*my* honestly, Richard."

"I cannot honestly, of course" murmured the lad, to an undertone.

Somewhat reassured, the anxious woman left the house to dispose of her last resource, and in less than an hour returned, but only with a few shillings. One was spent in purchasing food, the rest carefully wrapped in an old cambric handkerchief

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and placed in the workbox, which neither her husband nor the children ever touched, knowing her dearly she prized it.

Leaving by far the largest portion of the food she had obtained by so palmful a sacrifice for George, his wife, accompanied by her son, who carried Mary in his arms, set out for Blackheath. She had resolved to implore the assistance of Peter Margate, not for herself, but for her boy, to save him from crime and shame. She could have consented to a far greater humiliation. He was her brother—her hope—her life's last stay.

"He will not refuse me," she thought; "the good old man will aid us."

Doubtless the hope of the speaker would have been realized had she sought him, but, unfortunately, New Year's eve was the only day in the year on which her friend dined and spent the evening with the clerks of the firm.

When George Hoffman returned to the cottage, he was surprised to find Rachel and the children absent. As the hour passed, the feeling changed to annoyance. He disliked being alone, for solitude brought reflection. To occupy the time he rested himself at the table, and began to write; but he pushed the task, which became doubly painful as the dreams left therefore, and his hand again became unsteady.

In this irritable state of mind he heard a peculiar whistle.

"You may come in," he said, opening the door; "my wife is not here."

A sullen, hard-featured man, with beetle brows, shabby-genteelly dressed, lounged into the room. It was his evil genius, Tom Stiles.

"Alone?" continued the fellow, looking around him with the air of a tolerably old friend of the furniture.

"Rachel is absent," replied her husband.

"So much the better," said the tempter, with a sneer. "There is a match at 'The Crown and Magpie;' won't you come?"

"Can't."

"Why not?"

"I have no money."

On any other occasion, Styles would have offered to frank him; but the present one was too favorable an opportunity for his purpose to permit such an act of liberality.

"That's a pity," he observed, "for Bob is sure to win; and something else is sure to come of it. There will be no riot. Have you nothing to pawn or sell?"

"Nothing," murmured the wretched man; "all has been parted with."

His visitor looked round the room a second time, but saw nothing that would fetch even a few shillings, till his eye rested on the workbox.

"Rather a pretty thing that," he observed, advancing to take it up.

"Don't touch it," cried George Hoffman, stepping between the speaker and the subject of his curiosity; "it is my poor wife's—she would die for her. We have wasted bread, but I never sold the least to save her a pang while she lived."

"More fool you then," said Styles sneeringly. "What is in it?"

"Only a few tokens."

"And money?"

"Money!" repeated the drunkard; "where should Rachel procure money? It is long since her—"

The speaker suddenly paused. He had taken the box in his hands, and something rattled inside; it sounded like silver.

Styles laughed inwardly.

"I told you there was money in it!" he exclaimed.

George Hoffman slowly raised the lid, as if afraid of his own act. At the bottom of the box were four sovereigns and a shilling.

"It is for the rent!" he exclaimed. "She has sold the locket her father gave her," he added, at the remaining the rest of the trinkets. "I said it would be sacrilege to touch it."

"Of course it would, although you might win pounds with it."

"Pounds!" repeated his dupe, with a bewildered look.

"And pose a pleasant night into the bargain."

"How so?"

"Didn't I tell you there was to be a match at cribbage between Bob and Jem Sharpeye, down at the ruffian. "Bob is sure to win."

"No, no!" cried the drunkard, greatly excited; "it would be best—wretched—if allen, degraded, lost as I am, I cannot descend to rob my wife!"

"Rob!" repeated the tempter; "who asks a man rob his wife? What's here is his; he can take everything to her wedding-day. I've heard from one the lawyer's clerk, my as a dozen times. But as your pleasure," he added, "as you please. I'm off to 'The Crown and Magpie.' A pleasant evening to you, and a happy new year."

The last words were uttered in a mocking tone, as the speaker quitted the cottage of the man whose mental ruin he had so nearly effected. He walked slowly up the Relvedere-road, and lingered on Westcombe Bridge, in the expectation that his dupe would overtake him, for he knew how weak his resolutions were. For once, however, he was disappointed—he arrived at the tavern alone.

Had Rachel returned, there is little doubt that her husband would have resisted more, or at least waved, asked her for a portion of the money; but as night drew on, and the wretched man sat alone, without fire or light, in the cheerless room, the devil was impatient—the burning thirst—the desire for excitement grew stronger than it would rouse no longer.

"I may win," he muttered, as he took the contents of the box.

A deep blush—the silent reproach of his unworthy action—mantled on the cheek of the sleeper, but his mind fever in his blood proved stronger than the sense of shame, or the reproaches of a half-stilled conscience. The next instant he was in the street; the means of intoxication in his pocket, feeble and wife once forgotten.

It was nearly ten o'clock when Rachel and her children, weary and footsore, reached their desolate abode.

"Are you here, George?" she asked, as she crossed the threshold.

There was no reply. Oh, how bitterly did the stricken hall repeat her!

Little Mary began to ask for food.

"Directly, my love," said her distracted mother, "directly." The next—the thread of the landlord of turning into the cottage—the impossibility of replacing the sum—were alike forgotten at the cry of her child. She groped her way to the little table, caught up the workbox, and opened it—the money was gone!

For the first time since her marriage the lips of Rachel curled in scorn at the heartless conduct of the man for whom she had sacrificed so much, who had swore at the altar to be a protector to her—who was but a monetary feeling—grief-wasted anger, and she sank heartstricken on a chair.

"What is the matter, mother?" exclaimed Richard, rushing to her, whom he had hitherto held in his arms, upon the floor, and running to her.

"Nothing! nothing! only a momentary weakness. I—I am better now."

George must not be made to blush before his boy, she thought, if she had destroy the respect of the child for his father.

The revulsion was a womanly, but a useless one. Her son more than suspected the cause of her grief.

"We will go and seek your father," she said, at the same time taking Mary in her arms. "and then you shall have food, my child."

"But I want it now," sobbed the child. "I am so hungry!"

He cannot have spent it all, thought Rachel; something must be left.

She was wrong; but his reflections were dangerous. He compared the warning his father had given him on the subject of Jack Sanders, and the abstraction of the contents of the work-box.

Lessons of virtue and honesty, without the practice, seldom make a lasting impression, even from a parent's lips.

There was a great crowd at the bar of The Crown and Magpie. The landlady—a stout, vulgar-looking woman—was dispensing to her cup, a profusion of false cards, a lusty gold chain round her neck, and numerous rings on her fat fingers—was busily engaged in pouring out the drinks and tumors; the regular ones she was treating—for it need not be forgotten that it was New Year's eve.

Such was the scene of vice and dissipation which met the eye and ear of the husband of Rachel when, with little Mary in her arms, and protected by the presence of her son, she ventured into the house.

Mr. Hoffman was not there, Mrs. Bell said.

The question had to be repeated several times before the cold reply was given.

Can't tell the causes of any of my customers," replied the mistress of The Crown and Magpie, sharply.

"Perhaps you will oblige me by ascertaining."

"Too busy, and all that sort," said the fat, red, and right-poorer, sir. Half-and-half, directly!

"You can't go to their?" demanded Rachel, as Rachel was making her way towards the parlor.

"Who is more respectable house; I allow no females beyond the bar."

"But I see Mr. Hoffman's wife."

"So they all say," answered the woman, with a sneer.

There was a coarse, mocking laugh from the crowd of half-drunken wretches standing near. The eyes of Richard flashed angrily at the speaker, and still more, the imploring look of his mother restrained him.

"Let us return home," he said, in a despairing tone. "I feel faint and sick at heart."

A dull beating was in the ears of the unhappy wife tottered rather than walked from the place.

The time, the cold, and exhaustion, broke her strength; and Rachel proceeded with her children till she reached the thoroughfare leading through St. Margaret's-hill to Greenwich, when she sank, as if when a faint mean from Mary, whom she still carried in her arms, and Richard, who, throwing down her head under the thin, faded shawl which covered her; she could was cold as ice, and shivering, as if seized with an ague fit.

"She is dying!" groaned the terror-stricken parent—"dying for want of food!"

The heart of her boy could endure no more—it was breaking. The cup of misery and wretchedness had been filled to overflowing. His brain was on fire—tears could not quench it.

"Take her home, mother," he cried—"take her home! never fear but I will bring you food! Mary shan't die! I'll beg, I'll steal, I'll do anything to save her!"

Richard! Richard! do not leave me!" shrieked all his agonized parent. "Let me not lose both my children! If you love your mother, return—for pity's sake return!"

The appeal came too late. Her son, stung, maddened by her self-sacrifice, by the sight of misery so dear to him, had broken from her feeble grasp, darted down the thoroughfare, and was lost sight beyond the reach of her voice.

Rachel clung to the support of the churchyard for support, till a second mass, fainter than the first, sent a pang through her maternal heart.

"Son must not die in the street!" murmured Rachel. "Home—home! if I have strength to reach it!"

Oh, God!" she cried, with a sudden burst of anguish, "protect my boy! Restore him to me, my crime; guard him against the vices and the hideous snares which in a thousand forms await unbridled youth, and I will beg, I will implore—take him in Thy mercy!"

It was a fervent, prayer wrung from a mother's heart, uttered in faith, in agony, and years; and angels bore it to the mercy seat on high.

Clasping her perishing child yet closer to her aching bosom, she turned her face once more homewards her home.

When Richard Hoffman, yielding to the promptings of despair, quitted his mother and sister in the street, Bridge, in the agony of seeing and pouring them food. He felt as if he could have torn it from the jaws of a hungry tiger, rather than suffer it to be lost. The impulse—I am starve, but little Mary, the cry of her distracted parent, rang in his ears, and he hurried on, with the resolve of the course he took, till he found himself in St. James's park, where he relaxed his speed, and paused to recover his breath.

"What am I to do?" he asked himself; "there is no one to assist me."

"What am I to do?" he exclaimed, as he passed the long range of lighted windows, and saw many arms be more than imagined waved unceasingly above his head, as they moved in the night wind's with those blessed words, all on sweet love.

The scene was in truth a desolate one. Snow when the ground was covered, the approach of and cold as the world's charity. The evergreens in the houses been burned, the fuel was gone, their stock one sheet of solid ice, save where the keepers had broken it for the wild fowl, whose mournful, solitary cry startled the wretched boy, made more his sight.

By way of contrast with this dreary picture, broad glimmer of light were streaming from the windows of one of the splendid mansions fronting Carlton-terrace; sounds of music heard, and shadows distinctly seen upon the curtains, as the young, the gay, and happy, filled past them in the dance.

The boy regarded them wistfully.

"If they only knew," he thought; "if they only knew!"

There are but too many of the favored children of fortune who take *care not to know*—who guard their feelings as sacredly as they do their gems, and look on poverty as a pestilence interfering with their sport.

Our hero was not the only person in the park whose attention had been excited by the contrast which the scene within and the scene without the house afforded. A tall, well-dressed man stood listening to the music and regarding the windows. Richard approached, with the intention of implor ing assistance; but when the moonlight revealed the stern features of the gentleman, his heart fell at him, and he walked on, determined to try the next person whom he encountered.

He had not proceeded far before he met a lad of his own age, who, after regarding him for an instant, with evidences himself that he was not mistaken, called to him to stop.

It was the youth his father that very morning had warned him against—Jack Maudrey!

Jack was a perfect type of the thorough-bred London street-boy—pert, full of mirth, ugly, and squirrel, slippery as an eel, cunning as a fox, and as undaunted beyond his years. At all was one bad in him—was the training that had twisted and distorted the plant; in a better soil, and in more favorable circumstances it grown straight enough. From the time he had first known one boy, Jack had taken a great liking to him. Other lads scoffed and reproached him with his father's being a convicted felon. Richard never alluded to it. He was frank, free, and kind, and he consequently showed his artfulness by burying her fruit or calico.

Although half a head shorter than Richard, he was broad-shouldered and strong, and muscular, perhaps it was because he was better fed.

"You here?" he exclaimed, in a tone of delighted surprise; "eh? I must. What you gypsies?" Seeing that the youth did not understand him, he added, "What brings you here?"

"I scarcely know," replied the boy, dashing at his eyes; "I—I am sad. My mother and sister are hungry—starving! And I know to—"

His heart was too full. He could not pronounce the word.

"See if you could pick up anything?" said his companion, quickly and compassionately. "I am very right, too. I'll do anything rather than see my friends in distress; if I had the means."

"How do you live, Jack?" demanded Richard. "You have always money; and are so warmly clothed?"

"O—I live by my work," replied the lad.

"What work?"

Jack Maudrey felt rather embarrassed for an answer.

"You know," he said, after a pause, at the same time favoring our hero with an exceedingly knowing look.

"Indeed, I do not," observed our hero, honestly.

"Well, then, I help open doors," continued the youth. "I'm a link-boy; and like hours; when sometimes I am sorry for you—very sorry, Jack; for you have been kind to me and Mary.

"Let us return home," he said, in a despairing tone. "I feel faint and sick at heart."

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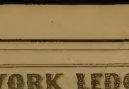
BROTHER TOM'S WIFE.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.



"If you do marry that girl, brother Tom, I'll have nothing to do with her. I won't visit her, nor call her sister, nor speak to her!"

And Lizzie Lawton put on as outraged and indignant an air as it was possible for her to assume.

"What's the objection?" asked brother Tom, in the light, trifling, flip tone, and with eyes more than ordinarily full of love.

"Objection!" The young lady's cherry lip curled. "Who is she? What is she?"

"A sweet-tempered, right-thinking, true-hearted young woman, who will make me a good little wife," replied brother Tom, gravely.

"A sewing-girl!" said Lizzie, contemptuously. "I don't care whether you marry her or not, but don't force her marriage," answered brother Tom. "And, if my eyes have not deceived me, she has been a frequent visitor ever since, or, at least, ever since my recollection of her."

"That's nothing to say," said the sister. "Mother was superior to her class, and has risen above it."

"Suppose I answer your objection to Harriet, and say that she is superior to her class, and will rise above it?" said brother Tom. "My father was a good matrimonial venture, and I may do the same."

"But why, brother Tom," urged the sister, "don't you choose a wife from among those on your own level?"

"What do you mean by those on our own level, Lizzie? Explain yourself, if you can."

"From among those who move in our own circle, I would say," was the cool, self-satisfied reply.

"Such are the Misses Watkins, for instance?"

"Yes; or the Misses Edson."

Where fathers support them in idleness, and expect the young men who marry them to do the same. Now, Lizzie, the fact of the business is, I don't like a very rich wife, and am afraid of one falling in love with her, that I was really frightened. I did not go near her pretty for six months after I felt the first movement of the under mention."

"Very cruel! O, Tom! Why not marry her? I could like her as my own sister."

"Can't afford a pet pig. I am a poor young man, and have only my talents and industry to rely upon for support. I do not, therefore, like to tie myself to a wife who will not help me along. I want an establishment but little less costly than the one you have described.

"Oh, but, Tom, there'll be no necessity for going to extravagant expense. Harriet is a lady, and her father is well off in the world, and he'll give her a house, and furnish it, no doubt, when she is married."

But Tom shook his head.

"Mary Edson's father," he replied, "may or may not be rich. My own private opinion is, that he is living up to his means, and has little to spare. And as to the house and furniture which Mary's husband is going to get, that is something very far off. I am not going to be foolish enough to marry a mother-in-law."

"Well, Eben is rich, Tom."

"The rich men of to-day are our poor men of to-morrow, Lizzie. Eben's father has not a finger for a rich father-in-law as a dependence. I mean to trust to myself, as honest person and a clear conscience, and to a wife, I want a woman with life, purpose, industry and independence of mind, and a good handful of these elements and cent popper, with a pretty little helpful do-nothing. A wife who will not be a mere nothing—doll ribbon somewhere inside, three or four feet from the extreme circumnavigation. And then, again, I want a wife capable of an independent young man, wonderfully given to the work of thinking for herself. I happen to be at the bottom of the ladder, and if I ever get to the top of it I mean to climb it myself, and not be pushed up. No, no, pity, I cannot afford one of your finished boarding-school misses for a wife. She would be too expensive for me. So, I am going to marry a girl who knows the value of real life—a true, good, patient, enduring, self-denying, sweet, affectionate body, who is not ashamed to earn her living with the needle. And I can tell you what, Dolly, I only wish you were more like Harriet Parker; there would be fewer chances in favor of your marrying a man of sense where you have one now. Don't you know that a sew society has been formed among the young men, and that some of the very best 'catches' among them have signed a pledge not to marry any girl who is not willing to commence matrimonial life with two rooms and a kitchen, and who doesn't know how to bake, cook and sew, and to wash and iron like the bargain? I am the president."

"Preposterous!" exclaimed Lizzie.

"Yes! try some other word when you get on the old maids' list, and see your place filled in the home of some man that is a man by a woman who was not ashamed of useful employment when she was a girl. You tell you what, my dainty little sister, there's a reform at work, and men worth having are beginning to choose between on marriage or marriage with girls of plainer notions and more useful accomplishments than are possessed by the fashionable young lady who thinks all day long of nothing saphyr or reading novels. So make up your mind to a reform or old-maidism. And now, in all probability you understand that I am quite in earnest about marrying Harriet Parker, I hope you will reconsider your hasty opinion, and not speaking to your sister-in-law. The less, let me tell you, will be all on your own side."

Brother Tom understood his own position entirely. He was not a man to stoop below himself in marrying. He could not unite himself with one who was ignorant and unrefined—against that his generously cultivated soul would have revolted. But he wanted a real, not an artificial, woman—one who could take her place beside him, as he had said, on the lowest round of fortune's ladder, and keep step with her upward. Such a one he had found in Harriet Parker, and he was independent enough to make her his wife.

Little what he said in discovering after brother Tom actually got married and commenced housekeeping in two rooms, with one servant-girl, earned-minded wife, that her new sister had shoot her something that inwardly won the love, confidence and respect of all who had access to the inner circle of her husband's life, and was so fortunate as to make a friend of Harriet.

"Marriage, they say, makes or saves a man," the brother overheard Lizzie say, in a low, confidential tone, to a lady friend. "But it will not mar the fortunes of brother Tom. He's got just the wife to keep him along if he can't get on of his own accord. I wish I could find a husband who would give me position to which they may rise."

"My own sentiments exactly, my dear," spoke out brother Tom. "She's a jewel, and worth a thousand of your pretty little fool women. Don't tell you so? But you couldn't believe me. Now, if you'll go and appreciate yourself to a drunkmaker, or a milliner, or to some one useful work—awful, not simply ornamental, I mean—I will congratulate you. But you are not worthy of the society I told you about. I had to resign when I got married. He's a splendid specimen, and will make a husband worth of a queen."

TEMPERANCE

Young men have commonly an ungarded frankness about them, which makes them an easy prey to designing villains. Hence, they are too apt to look upon every knave or fool who tells them that he is their friend, as a man to be trusted, too often, less and ruin follow. Beware, therefore, of professions of friendship made to you at sight upon a short acquaintance. *Real friendship* is of slow growth. Friendship which promises to much like what the poet describes:

"And what friendship but a name,
A charm that lulls to sleep,
A shade that follows wealth and fame,
And leaves the wretch to weep."

WORK IF YOU WOULD RISE.

Richard Burke being found in a reverie shortly after an interview with a member of Parliament by his brother, Edmund Burke, and questioned what he was thinking about, replied—"I have been wondering how Ned has contrived to monopolize all the talents of the family; but then, said he, after a pause, when we were at play, he was always at work." The force of this anecdote is obvious. In fact, the boy who is found to be considered not inferior, in natural talents, to his brothers, will be found, in the estimation of the world, the other did comparatively obscure. Don't trust to your genius, young man, if you would rise, but work—work—work.

TRUE POLITENESS.

As to politeness, many have attempted definitions of it, but it is like beauty, indefinable in description, definition not being able to comprise it. I would, however, venture to call it "benevolence in trifles," or the preference of others to ourselves in little, daily, homely occurrences in the commerce of life. It is a perpetual sacrifice of self, little wants of those with whom we are, by which attention and kindness are shown to others. Hence, all ceremonious, formal compliments, stiff civilities, will never be politeness; that must be easy, natural, unaffected, and, above all, it must be genial; else this but a mind benevolent and perpetually attentive to the most trifling and disposition is trifles to all you converse or live with?

ANTS OF BUSINESS.

Nothing is more interesting than to see an army of ants engaged in their labors. Each one knows what in doing so, they manifest an intuitive system and order which is truly surprising. A regular file is established between the nest and the food of which, while another is descending upon the opposite side, each one of the ants bearing a load of food about the size of a sixpence in his mouth. A large number appear to be stationed as overseers or superintendents, for the sole purpose of biting off the stems of the leaves, and thus causing them to fall to the ground, where they are taken by other dispatchment, whose business is evidently that of cutting the leaves into small pieces for the consumption. A long procession is kept constantly marching, below with the leaves.

EXCESSIVE POLITENESS.—A story is told of a very polite young man who was so extreme in his person it was the line of his duty to bang. "Sir," said the gentleman, after a most wearisome and repeating the rope, "really your attention deserves the highest praise. I am quite sorry that your father rather have hung me." "Really," said the sheriff, "you are pleased to be complimentary. I do not know what you intended. It would give me so much pleasure to hang."

KNOWLEDGE OF LIFE.—He who sets out on the journey of life with a thorough knowledge of books, but a shallow knowledge of men—with much sense of others, and little of his own—will find himself miserably cramped. A less amount of common and constant occurrence as a Dutchman without learning, but with his pipe and tobacco-pouch, an Italian without his fiddle, or an Englishman without his umbrella.

A THANKSGIVING "IDEA."—A writer beautifully remarks that a man's mother is the epicentre of his Maker. Misfortunes, and even crime, may come between between her and her son. While his mother lives, a man will have one friend on earth who will not desert him when he is ready to perish. Her affection flows from a pure fountain, and comes only at the ocean of eternity.

ALLAN, THE CHANGELESS.

BY SALLIE M. SIVAN.

Three country eyes, with their intense of bliss,
Their pure love, do said and yes on his,
The proud lips' classic curve, the golden hue
Among his love light on the wavy hair.
These haunt me ever, these bring to them—
But who and what, and what manifestation with me?
One half this time could on my solitude years—
But he is gone, believe a by my fears.

I smile and gone, and then act smiling, too,
Then shadows rush along my heart, I weep;
Years trouble in thine eye like drops of few
In warm winds, across the fair grass.
There's with me when aware spring is blowing flowers,
When flutter crowns the summer's wild bowers,
When autumn's fading charms are blooding red,
And when sere winter's frosts scare are shed.

When splendid sunsets burn in western skies,
And when I watch midnight soldiers o'er the heart;
When night's fair stars awake my spirit's sight,
And when pure silence, where I am not sad,
Also, bright boy, my weary way wrote on
Where many a ray of love can light it gone;
Shadows and dreary with thine eyes to me,
If then will by the morrow look darkest to me.

Then leave me, leave me, forget not me—
Bear thy great beauty and thy love away!
My heart will scare a void, yet I have power
To live more, rather than ever before.
To waive such fate as mine—ah, this would be
Too dark, my fallen, for a shape like thine—
Give—are sublime saints in thy breathe—
Then will not I! Then may wish—I am blest.

THE CROWN JEWELS.

A TALE OF LONDON AND PARIS.

By Colonel Sir Henry Morton Stanley, M.P.,
Author of "Lady Clayton," etc., etc.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1877, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the Librarian of Congress at the Southern District of New York.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE TWO DUELLISTS.—A MYSTERY CLEARED UP.

We now request our readers to return with us briefly to the following the events of our tale thus far, to go with us to the old abbey, and to the rooms of which we left Colonel Varney rather disturbed by the advance of Louis the Count Blenville.

Two words have elapsed since those of the scenes which we have described in the preceding chapter occurred. In the interval Insidious has occurred which will now command our attention. It will be remembered that we left Hinchcliff out of prison on bail, and having recently, as it were, left him, during the day of trial, in order to be present as a witness. The latter, by the influence of the chief of Paul but of all who heard, and of the Lord Mayor himself, we now see Sir Paul Varney. The latter he has probably shared in this amusement, and we will now explain the mystery.

When Hinchcliff found himself arrested upon giving his information about the robbery, and fearing that he would be sacrificed, he resolved to send for the magistrate and make a full, confession, which he did. He then requested to be released.

"On bail to appear as witness against Lord Neagle and the Earl of Corybeare, when demanded," was the answer.

Hinchcliff could think of no one—know no one who would give this sacrifice.

"You must then remain in custody."

"Give my own bail! I will get bail," he suddenly cried, seeing the officers approach to lead him away.

He wrote as follows:

"Metropolis's office, London, January 7—.

"To Sir Paul Varney, Bart., M.P., Lord Mayor of London: I am glad you are aware of your daughter's

"Lady Blenville."

In two hours after this was dispatched, Sir Paul Varney made his appearance. All Hinchcliff's request they were permitted to be alone.

"Well, sir!" said Sir Paul, coldly, "I have received your note! I hear you are under arrest as a participator in this great robbery!"

"Men say you drove the Earl to it, by winning all his money?" said the ex-lackey, with a bitter voice, as if he hatred could not be concealed even when it was policy for him to appear well disposed; a sense the word of Sir Paul deposed his freedom or imprisonment.

"What of my child?"

"I know where she is!" (This was true, as Hinchcliff had accidentally seen Kate standing at the window of the old abbey as he was on his way to court.)

"What is your price?—I see I must buy your knowledge, fellow!"

"My bail; I want security! Some six or eight thousand! I don't know how much. Go my bail and I'll give you up your daughter!"

"Do you swear it?"

"On all the gospels and epistles, too!"

"Can I find her?"

"She is in London!"

"Honorable and virtuous, man!"

"So far as I know—I'll show her to you!"

"Do this and you shall be bailed!"

The baron went into private consultations in writing to the magistrate that he would become security for Hinchcliff's appearance, and that he left the place together in a hackney-coach, the latter first being searched to see that he had no arms whatever, and Sir Paul arming himself to secure his presence with him. Hinchcliff had promised to take him to the very place where his daughter was: and verily did he comply with his pledge. He drove straight to the old abbey, and ordered the coachman to stop at the arched and encathroned gate.

"Is this the place?" said Sir Paul, eagerly looking out of the carriage window.

"No," said Hinchcliff, who suddenly conceived the idea of having Sir Paul see his daughter as a stranger, to hope that he might find her in love and run away with her, and thus afford him a terrible revenge. "I call here to ask the number. I have forgotten the house."

"Not without me," answered Sir Paul, who followed him to the door, fearing he meant to deceive him; and escape into the building.

"No Paul. I am not going away. I only want to ask the young woman. There's her address now, at the window. She has heard my knock."

Sir Paul looked up, and caught a glimpse of the beautiful side face of his daughter, but, far from recognizing her, emotions of admiration for her were kindled in his susceptible bosom, ever ready to take fire at the sight of rare female beauty.

"Call your mistress this gentleman is a French officer, and knows her husband," he said, in a low voice, to Lizette. "He would like to see her. If he calls, treat him civilly."

"And who are you, monsieur?" she was about to ask, but he anticipated her question.

"Me? I am brother to the man that brought your mistress the plants from the cottage." (The villain had actually seen an old acquaintance of his bringing some plants thither, and had invited him to drink at the nearest public house, and to him learned what new stood him in good stead.) "Here's one of the shillings you gave him, which he gave me. He knows all about you, and so do I, and would be glad to serve you. I'm the one that took your mistress' husband to the cave."

"Then you are a good friend."

All this while Sir Paul's eyes and attention were given to the window, through which he occasionally got a glimpse of Catharine's graceful figure.

Some more private conversation passed between the two, and Lizette, hesitating and smiling, ran up stairs, a guinea richer than she was when she came down.

"I know now, Sir Paul," said Hinchcliff. "It is in the next street where she is."

As he spoke he proceeded as if he would go back into the coach, and stood aside for Sir Paul, still with pistol in hand, to precede him; he so passed in, Hinchcliff knocked the pistol out of his grasp, pushed him in, and, before he could regain him, ran for his life down the street. In his fall, the pistol went off in the carriage, the horses leaped forward in affright, and dashed madly on a lamp-post, turned short, overset the hackney-coach, and tearing and kicking themselves to pieces, from it, they ran at full speed up the street. Every one ran to the overturned coach, from which the coachdriver hurried after his horses. Sir Paul was found within suffering great pain, and was released only with when a dozen men had collected around the door of which was understood. They took him into the house that he could not stand, and, in fact, having been beaten by being caught between the coach and the earth, as he was within it, he found it get out when the carriage was over.

"Where shall we take you, sir?" said respectfully a policeman, seeing that the injured person was evidently a gentleman.

"I feel it too much now, just now, to go further than this shop. Let me lie down in there. At this moment some one comes out of the door. It is Paul Varney."

As the two constables were very active—the sound of a title in English ears being a talisman of power to command attention—and were about to remove Sir Paul into the shop, Catharine, who, by chance, was, from the window, and was the whole of the scene, and perceiving that the object of the attack it was a French gentleman in the carriage at the door, ran down to help and welcome him, and caused her down to bid them convey "the wounded gentleman into her own dwelling." Suffering, as Sir Paul was, with the peculiar severity of the torture of his limb, this message, as it fell upon her ears, filled him with pleasure, and though he did not say, yet he felt that "if it were to bring him the acquaintance with so lovely a woman, it were a bliss not dearly bought."

"But find first who he is, Lizette," had been the elderly message of her mistress as she was about to the stairs. "If he is not a gentleman, he must remain in the upstairs room, and you must not bring him up stairs."

He is a gentleman—a lord—Sir Paul de Varny, a name such name, cried Lizette, running back.

"Then let him be brought up stairs, and placed on the longer bed."

In a few minutes the baron, borne by four strong men, was conveyed into the upper apartment, which before has been mentioned, and laid near to the window upon a bed. The sight of the beautiful woman who, with careful words, directed where and how they should lay him, and her sweet, sympathizing looks, filled him with delight.

"Pardon," he said in French, supposing her to be a French lady "pardon the trouble I am about you to, madame. I hope soon to be removed to my own rooms, but I am willing to know to whom—"

"Do not speak, monsieur. Be quiet as you can. One of these officers will go for a surgeon. You must not think of moving yet. You shall have here every attention you require."

Hinchcliff, meanwhile, quite overjoyed at the success of his ruse, gave the officers directions as he could to conceal himself; and after some delay at one place and another, he finally decided on going to the "Sack Inn," where he could get a room, and, gags a room, pledge Paul to secrecy, and go and convey it, on the pretext of his being sent for till the trial, and did not desire to attract attention.

In this manner it was that Sir Paul was extracted from Botany Bay Paul in the crowd which gathered at the horrible death of Stennis. Terrified at this affair, and on the refusal thereof of London and its scenes, the country abode was how after in vain searching for the wretched man up to despair, and sought his host. This he found gone. But on calling another, he received the letter from Ian, where he heard the news we already know, and in addition to it, that Ralph had taken the young girl in his house, and that Sarah and he were engaged to be married on the night of their attempted elopement. Hinchcliff, therefore, had no time to lose, if he would be in time to prevent the consummation of the latter, and therefore resolved on the step we have described.

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By accident, that evening the young French girl, whom rescued from the fury of the two mutineers by Rose, was passing the door of the room of Beresford, who he carried her on the couch, on which he lay feebly, with an exclamation—

"That is our sleep-walk!"

The young girl was brought into the room, and welcomed by French by Beresford, who, when he saw sad recognized her, but she knew nothing of them, wounded and pale as they were. She, with some embarrassment, said—

"I have come to London to declare the innocence of two young English men who are accused of murdering the Marquis de ——. I saw a reward offered for them in Paris. I heard they had come to London, to take them to France in chains. They are innocent; and alone, with scarcely money to come, I got to London, and was coming on where when my boat was sunk, and I was saved by this young man, Monsieur Ralph. I asked him to tell me where I could find somebody to tell me where I could see the Baire de Londres. He could not tell, but said he would bring me to this inn, and do all he could for me, that I might find out how to save the two innocents."

Billington and Beresford interchanged looks of amazement across the room, on the opposite side of which they lay.

"Who did this murder?" asked Beresford, full of marvel at such a meeting.

"I don't myself. I am the only daughter of the marquis. He refused to let me marry a young Jewelry about I loved. He, unarmed, in a rage I slay him! To conceal the crime, I went and called two young men, and—"

"We know the rest, murderess, and the cause to which you fell by your cruel wrongs," cried Lord Beresford, shaking his open fingers at her with flashing eyes. "Beautiful devil! splendid tigress! Oh, that I were young and well! We were taken and bound, and were being conveyed to Paris as murderers, when we were rescued, only at the expense of one an arm, and the other of an eye."

"Pardon, monsieur!" and she met herself at their feet. "I came to save you! I repent! I am beautiful, but evil! The heart is not always good when she body is fair. I had a devil in me, the fine magnificent Madeline. I will did! I am ready to surrender myself!"

The door, but, had heard all this. By his information, in his solution a constable was in the room. The French girl submitted herself with a calm, and the latter—seemed relieved to have taken the place of the innocent; and asking and hearing and kissing themselves again from it, they ran at full speed up the street. Every one ran to the overturned coach, from which the coach-driver hurried after his horses. Sir Paul was found within suffering great pain, and was released only with when a dozen men had collected around the door of which was understood. They took him into the house that he could not stand, in fact, having been beaten by being caught between the coach and the earth, as he was within it, and found it get out when the carriage was over.

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THE NEW YORK LEDGER

AMERICAN THEMES.

Opening for a National Poem.

BY WILLIAM ROSE WALLACE.

I hear the chant of Scouts far away;
I hear the hymn of crown, and the roar
Of war-peal sounds under night and day—
The Sun and Moon, each with a mighty share;
I see the shipbuilders hewing down
With solemn exultation; I behold a throng
Of manly armies crowding to the front
Down far-off mountains; like a flood they roll!
I hear—I see—I feel! I'm the New-belong
to it.

I would from it my inspiration woo—
From it a song, unhovered boasting utter,
Whose every line should be the pledge of power
Beyond John's pyramid, or Europe's art!
It have his heart can have divided voice
For him the lake; for him Kentucky's bowers;
For him Niagara; for him the trees
Of empire-grow'rs that Alabama flowers;
For him the gulf-sands, and Mexican jewels;
For him the prairies, so fine the drug.
For him, too, fresh as that primal hour,
When the first rainbow rode the clouds, and told
Peace to the tribes; here rather a patriot-poet
O'er mighty theme; but Europe, pale and old,
In awful with white hairs—the slave of gold,
And creeds, as dross as dust on coffin-lids—
A tepid memory of the ancient relish,
Oh that God's Freedom would arise, and fall
His earthquake trumpet up and hurl the Future!

III.

Here all are monarchic, and 'tis mine to think;
Here men are subjects, and 'tis mine to be free;
Here tyranny visibly piles the fabric's brass;
Here thoughtful eyes look out, and thoughtful hearts
Feel the dumb pressure of a weight of ages;
That raise for prophets, on fears the dog.
Yesterday better; here, from the mists to see,
My soul shrieked a narrow compact keep!
Not with the imperfect arm—for hereditary reason enough!

Yet not for Nature's sake each scene alone
A thousand glorious shapes of beauty bring
For scenes than in the old, brown tome,
Shut till them in the old, brown tome,
Which the world worshipped—this now gives the wrong
Here through all space, and all the years ago here,
Are the great deeds of Freedom's heroes done!
At which the nature of my celebrate;
Clang on the startled veil, and flashes stars for
New York, 1858.

THE OLD TRAPPER'S STORY.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

At Independence, Missouri—that grand rendezvous for traders, trappers, travelers, emigrants, Indians, and, in short, for all sorts, of, or relating from, the Far West—I once met an old mountaineer by the name of Glass—John Glass—though he looked as little like a glass as could well be imagined, think of. In fact, John clearly showed, in his weather-beaten, sun-dried face, that he had been "a hard nord to travel." Indeed, on second thought, I hardly know as I am justified in saying that John Glass had any face at all; but he had a head, and the front part of that head most resembled one side of an old mountain over which a wasked ground—a portion of the nose and original skin having been removed, as well as a place a kind of cicatrized surface, which a great amount of weather, and a total absence of soap and water, had turned to a color that I feel comparable with nothing except the aforesaid vegetable.

Now at the time I became acquainted with John personally; but being somewhat fascinated by his appearance, I begged an introduction, which was readily accorded by one having the honor of some familiarity with the noted trapper of the wilderness.

"I say, old boss, buyer's a settlement shap as wants to shear you a fur," were the words which brought the attention of John Glass fully upon myself, and we may only refer the translation to the startled mountaineer.

"Well, stranger, you kin know as a heap of you're civil," was the reply of my new acquaintance, spoken in a tone that sounded not unlike the gurgling of water from a pre. "Glass—how?" he added, inquiringly, having, like many another individual I met, of an inquisitive which might accrue from my acquaintance.

I instantly took this hint, and a plug of tobacco from my pocket, and handing the latter to my new friend, I observed that he had better keep the whole of it, as I had a double heap in store.

"Harrow!" cried the old trapper. "You're a tremp, you ar', and I'll be d—d if you aain say amount of dandified Jimcrackie I ever seed. You're a true as hie bottom, or I'm a wolf—you all two!"

I saw I had made a good impression on my auto friend of the wilderness, and I naturally argued, that if a ping of tobacco could do that much, a little winkey would do a great deal, so after a few exchanges of civilities, in which I endeavored to compliment John as much as he had me, I artfully suggested that we might as well take a drink.

"Harrow!" he cried, in his broadly accented dialect, "you're one on 'em, stranger, and old genial Jack's the man to help him. I know you. Drink! In course I will—and of you kin just find the fellar as says John Glass ever was known to refuse to drink when ar'd, you'll see a fight."

Accordingly, we adjourned to one of that kind of institutions in which those rough brokers meet the emporium's and, after having got together a few of John's friends, we chartered a corner of the shanty for that especial occasion, and, therein having been brought forward, in due proportion to the number and quality of the goods, who sat down and then proceed to it. I pass over next to either; and each man having loaded, prepared to fire—and did fire—and I was the last of number I never before beheld except at the discharge of a regular battery.

My sole object in this operation was to hear from the lips of John Glass himself how it had happened that his face—head he means to say—was seriously damaged; and so, seizing the first favorable opportunity, I broached the subject in a quiet way.

"Well, stranger," said John, "that was one o' the scrapes, you, he added, turning to one of his companions, "you remembers that, I reckon?"

"Wal, I does, hoss," returned the other; "and ef I didn't see, and hyar the dead that time, may I never see the Rocky agin!"

"Yes, Bill," pursued Glass, "you thought as how I war dead; and it's like you wasn't glad to find it different, for you'd got my beas and gun all ready enough. But you see, worn John Glass goes under, there's gotine to be an 'arthquake; and that wars's many 'arthquakes there. Stranger," he added, filling his glass and turning to me, "I'll just tell you how it was, for you're right discreet for a settlement fellar, and decency ought be to remarked. You see, stranger, it war a good many years ago—I don't exactly remember how many—that me and a party war gittin out to the mountains. Wal, we'd fitted up for a reg'lar trapping expedition, and had our horses and mules, and all the rest o' our fixins for a reg'lar three months' hunt. We got over onto the Black Hills without any accident, which war more'n'n talk about for us, kase we didn't often go for without them things. I say we got over onto the Black Hills, and pitched our camp in one o' the prettiest places I ever seed, what we kind o' spread ourselves to make heaven easy. Bill, hyar, and some two hoss—pieced off, kind o' partner like, and did business in our own way, and that war way our some.

"One day, as we war off that hyar together, setting our traps along a stream what the nine ver rupther seemed to like the fish in, they allers kin smelling round, looking pleased like curious, we got kind o' tangled up in a thicket o' wild cherry, which growed along t h e stream. I war pushing along a bottle a head o' Bill, when all at once's, as I kin to it, kind o' open ing, I sees a big grizzly, as quiet as a kitten, a turning on the 'arth with bones for his tools as laid below.

"'Harrow, Bill!' says I, 'thyer's fun, and that's meat.'

"'What's the trouse, Jack?' says Bill, hurrying up to me.

"I showed him the b'ar almost twenty yards off, and we agreed as how we'd draw his blood.

"Now, stranger," continued the old trapper, turning to me," from that grizzly is some."

"In a bear fight," I quietly suggested.

"Exactly—how'd I know?" I replied the mountaineer. "They're some in a b'ar fight—just so; and you're some puzzle, any 'ithout. Wal, as I was saying, we fetched our rifles to an aim, and both spoke together. We both hit old grizzly plum middle, and I reckon it often as not killed him; and our shots didn't seem to do no more nor just kind o' rile the beast. He left off his work at that, and looked round, as mvage as Old Nick; and then, seeing our smoke curling up over the bush, he knew'd there was some fun for him that, and twoke for us like a streak o' greased lightning.

"'Harrow, Bill!' says I, 'that's the fur's now. We'll be meals meat on, sure as shooting.'

"'Wal, you know, Jack,' says Bill, 'cubes our legs is longer nor the b'ar's.'

"'It's a true story, stranger,' says I, as we both on us made a break through the thicket.

"Bill was behind me afore, but he was ahead of me now; and at that time could do some full walking then, I never seed snakes. Hey, Bill?"

"Wal, I did, Jack," answered Bill, who was himself nearly as pretty a specimen of the wilderness as the narrator.

"We both on us tore through the bushes like mad," resumed the old mountaineer; "but there was awful thicker ones ahead. I tell you, we didn't get along not nigh so fast as I has afore now, bursting about the way we only does in pursuit of or nigh so fast as the cursed old b'ar, who him plunging after us, and we all both a-going, helter skelter, every jump. Maybe as how I didn't wear some of them thar old bushes, which stuck into me at every purge, and I reckon as how you can see some scars with old grizzly pulling up close behind.

"At last we came to a clearing of the thicket, wher thar was a patch o' prairie, and a big steep hill, which I reckon as how you remembers well, Bill?

"'Harrow, Bill!' says I; 'it's bluff or die, for old grizzly has got knuckerbrean, and he ain't so far behind that we can't hear his breath a-blow. Hey, Bill?'

"'Harrow!' cried the old trapper. 'You're a tremp, you ar', and Bill he'll help you agin any amount of dandified Jimcrackie I ever seed. You're a true as hie bottom, or I'm a wolf—you all two!'

"I saw I had made a good impression on my auto friend of the wilderness, and I naturally argued, that if a ping of tobacco could do that much, a little winkey would do a great deal, so after a few exchanges of civilities, in which I endeavored to compliment John as much as he had me, I artfully suggested that we might as well take a drink.

"Harrow!" he cried, in his broadly accented dialect, "you're one on 'em, stranger, and old genial Jack's the man to help him. I know you. Drink! In course I will—and of you kin just find the fellar as says John Glass ever was known to refuse to drink when ar'd, you'll see a fight."

Accordingly, we adjourned to one of that kind of institutions in which those rough brokers meet the emporium's and, after having got together a few of John's friends, we chartered a corner of the shanty for that especial occasion, therein having been brought forward, in due proportion to the number and quality of the goods, who sat down and then proceed to it. I pass over next to either; and each man having loaded, prepared to fire—and did fire—and I was the last of number I never before beheld except at the discharge of a regular battery.

My sole object in this operation was to hear from the lips of John Glass himself how it had happened that his face—head he means to say—was seriously damaged; and so, seizing the first favorable opportunity, I broached the subject in a quiet way.

"Wal, stranger," said John, "that was one o' the scrapes, you," he added, turning to one of his companions, "you remembers that, I reckon?"

"Wal, I does, hoss," returned the other; "and ef I didn't see, and hyar the dead that time, may I never see the Rocky agin!"

"Yes, Bill," pursued Glass, "you thought as how I war dead; and it's like you wasn't glad to find it different, for you'd got my beas and gun all ready enough. But you see, worn John Glass goes under, there's gotine to be an 'arthquake; and that wars's many 'arthquakes there. Stranger," he added, filling his glass and turning to me, "I'll just tell you how it was, for you're right discreet for a settlement fellar, and decency ought be to remarked. You see, stranger, it war a good many years ago—I don't exactly remember how many—that me and a party war gittin out to the mountains. Wal, we'd fitted up for a reg'lar trapping expedition, and had our horses and mules, and all the rest o' our fixins for a reg'lar three months' hunt. We got over onto the Black Hills without any accident, which war more'n'n talk about for us, kase we didn't often go for without them things. I say we got over onto the Black Hills, and pitched our camp in one o' the prettiest places I ever seed, what we kind o' spread ourselves to make heaven easy. Bill, hyar, and some two hoss—pieced off, kind o' partner like, and did business in our own way, and that thar way war some.

"One day, as we war off that thar way